Thomas. Norman, Taunton.

No. 458.

THE

TESTIMONY OF HISTORY

AGAINST

THE CHURCH OF ROME.

See next page.

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Thomas. C. Norman
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[The Engraving on the title-page represents the medal struck by order of pope Gregory XIII. in commemoration of the massacre of the Protestants at Paris, August 24, 1572. The likeness of the pope adorns one side of the medal, and on the other an angel is described, with a sword in his right hand and a cross in his left, destroying the Huguenots, (*Ugonottorum strages*—"the slaughter of the Huguenots,") as the Protestants were called. "Gregory taught," the Jesuit Bonanni observes, "that that slaughter was not effected without the assistance of God, and the Divine counsel, in a medal which was struck, and in which an angel, armed with a sword and a cross, is rushing against the rebels: by which figure also he calls to mind, that the houses of the heretics were marked with a white cross, that the royal soldiers might distinguish them amongst the rest, as, in like manner, the white cross was carried by themselves upon their caps." —*Numismata Pontificum Romanorum*, tom. i. p. 336.]

THE TESTIMONY OF HISTORY AGAINST THE CHURCH OF ROME.

WE live in a day of peculiar privileges and responsibility. Numerous and varied are the efforts made for the diffusion of the gospel. And in its "free course" there is much cause for joy. If Christ is preached, and sinners believe, and the saints are edified, who that loves the Redeemer can refuse to be glad? But there are some who look upon all this with contempt and scorn, and, if they had the power, would even stop the mouths of the faithful witnesses. The priest of Rome tells us, that our ministers are unauthorised, our assemblies unblessed; and all Protestants, however Christ-like their tempers and godly their lives, are branded as heretics and schismatics, cut off from the charities of the gospel in this life, and doomed to eternal pains in the world to come.

This is no false accusation. The very children of Roman Catholics are trained up in uncharitableness and intolerance. Thus runs the Douay Catechism:—"*Q.* What is mortal sin? *A.* It is a wilful transgression in matter of weight against any known commandment of God, or the church, or of some lawful superior. *Q.* Whither go such as die in mortal sin? *A.* To hell for all eternity."* The church of Rome declares that Protestantism is heresy: heresy is a breach of the first commandment, that is, in ecclesiastical language, a mortal sin; and the punishment is everlasting woe.

It is natural to ask on what grounds these denunciations rest. If I warn the wicked of their danger—if I tell the drunkard, the unclean, and others of like character, that unless they repent and turn to God they will be lost for ever, I am warranted by Holy Scripture in doing so, for it is solemnly declared by the apostle Paul that "neither

* Abstract of the Douay Catechism, p. 71.

fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, shall inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Corvi. 9, 10. But Popery adopts very different language. You may love God "with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and strength;" every grace may shine in your character, and be embodied in your conduct; you may resemble Abraham in faith, Moses in meekness, David in fervour, Job in patience, John in love, Paul in zeal: it matters not. If you refuse to be a Papist, you are foredoomed to destruction, and notwithstanding all your excellences, you must go "to hell for all eternity." Out of the Roman Catholic church, all her sons will tell you, there is no salvation. "She alone has an uninterrupted succession of pastors from the apostles of Christ. She alone has always been one, by all her members professing one faith, in one communion, under one chief pastor, succeeding St. Peter, to whom Christ committed the charge of his whole flock, John xxi. 15, etc., and the keys of heaven, Matt. xvi. 19. She alone has always been holy, and teaching all holiness, by inviting all to holiness, by affording all helps and means of holiness, and by having, in all ages, innumerable holy ones in her communion. She alone is catholic, or universal, by subsisting in all ages, by teaching all nations, and by maintaining all truths. She alone is apostolical, by deriving her doctrine, her communion, her orders and mission, from the apostles of Christ."*

These are startling assertions, very gravely and confidently alleged. If they are founded in truth, we are bound to retrace our steps, and humbly ask the pope to forgive us, and restore us to his communion. But before we do this, we will examine the above cited allegations one by one, and adduce the evidence of facts. WHAT IS THE VOICE OF HISTORY?

I. The church, it is said, is apostolic.

What is meant by this is, that the church "was planted by the apostles, and continues in the possession of the same doctrine they taught:" that Peter was constituted prince of the apostles, the visible head of the church on earth, the "true legitimate vicar of Jesus Christ;" that he founded the church of Rome, and became its bishop; and that the popes are his successors. Hence it is inferred, that the church of Rome is the church of Christ, the centre of authority, the "mother and mistress of all churches;" that

* Gother's Papist Misrepresented and Represented, p. 84.

her doctrines are "neither novel, nor of recent origin;" and that she is governed "by no other than apostolic men."*

All this is entirely contrary to fact. The apostle Peter never assumed superiority over his brethren, nor did they ever yield it to him. He had indeed the honour of "opening the door of faith," both to the Jews and to the Gentiles, Acts ii.—x., but he exercised no power over the churches which his fellow apostles did not also enjoy. On the contrary, when Samaria received the word of God, he and John were sent by their brethren to confirm the new converts in their faith, and willingly accepted the commission. When the apostles and elders met to consult respecting the Gentiles, (see Acts xv.,) Peter only gave his advice as an individual member of the assembly; and James, not Peter, suggested the line of conduct which was unanimously adopted. At Antioch, Paul "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed," Gal. ii. 11. In his latter days, when he wrote to the churches, he assumed no other character than that of an apostle and fellow elder, beseeching, not commanding the saints. No; the Christian church rested not on any man; it was "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," Eph. ii. 20.

It is generally believed that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome; but how long he lived in that city no one can tell. This however is certain, that he was never bishop of Rome at all. If ancient historians say that he founded the church in that city, which is not correct, for it existed long before he went there, they ascribe that honour to him and Paul conjointly; and in deducing the succession of bishops they invariably begin with Linus, who was supposed to have received his appointment from the two apostles. The apostles themselves, it is well known, did not accept any pastoral charge, but spent their time in traversing the world, and establishing Christian churches, which they immediately committed to other persons, to be taught and governed according to the will of the Saviour. Here, then, we see the first link of the chain broken.

Doubtless, if such power had been given to the apostle Peter and his successors, it would have been acknowledged by the first churches. It is a remarkable fact, that for more

* Abstract of the Douay Catechism. p. 23. Catechism of the Council of Trent, p. 102. (Donovan's Edition.)

than three hundred years after the apostolic age, nothing is heard of it. The bishops of Rome, it is true, did now and then assume a degree of authority, derived from their residence in the metropolis of the empire, but all attempts to encroach on the privileges of their brethren were promptly and stoutly repulsed. Cyprian, for instance, bishop of Carthage, in the middle of the third century, boldly resisted the endeavours of Stephen, the Roman bishop, to compel other churches to adopt his opinions and follow his practice. Nay, as late as the year 595, pope Gregory I., commonly called "the great," declared that whosoever should call himself "universal bishop," or desire to be called so, would deserve to be regarded as the forerunner of Antichrist. In short, no one acquainted with ecclesiastical history is ignorant that the power of the bishops or popes of Rome was a plant of late and slow growth. The seed was early sown by ambitious men, but it was not till the Roman empire was destroyed, and the dark ages had overshadowed the world, that the poison-tree of papal usurpation shot forth in its luxuriance.

And the means by which the change was brought about were worthy of the end. Nothing contributed so much to extend and confirm the supremacy assumed by the popes as the decretals, first published in the ninth century. They consisted of letters, decrees, and canons, or ecclesiastical rules, ascribed to the bishops of Rome from the earliest period to the ninth century, and in which they were made to give such directions, and issue such commands, as they would have done had the abominations of the papacy then existed. Men were thereby led to believe that the ceremonies, orders, and form of government then established were ancient, and even apostolic, and not, as they were in reality, inventions of later date. For a long time the book passed current in the world, and the canon law was founded on it. But the author had performed his work in so blundering, bungling a manner, that when learning revived, the imposture was quickly detected, and it was seen that the production was an infamous collection of frauds and forgeries, put together by an obscure writer, for the purpose of exalting the pretensions of the Roman see. Letters are attributed to men who died long before the time when it was said they were written: documents are dated in the years of magistrates who were not in office at the time; and fragments of

later authors, of different periods, are joined together, and the name of some ancient prefixed. The learned, even among Roman Catholics, have now, with one consent, rejected these things as spurious; but the absurdities they originated or legalized are still cherished; and, notwithstanding the admitted fraud, the champions of Popery have not refrained from adducing them as authorities in their standard works of controversy. Is not this the "deceivableness of unrighteousness?" 2 Thess. ii. 10.

Still we are told that the church of Rome is apostolic, and traces the succession of her bishops from the apostles. Let us ask, then, who and what manner of men they were. Some of the first bishops of Rome, we are willing to allow, were good men. But Liberius, A. D. 357, was an Arian, holding many and awful errors. Formosus, A. D. 891, was guilty of perjury. Stephen VII., A. D. 896, a ringleader in every vice. He entered, says Baronius, like a thief, and died, as he deserved, by the rope. John XII., A. D. 956, was found guilty in a Roman synod, of blasphemy, perjury, sacrilege, adultery, incest, and murder. Benedict IX., A. D. 1033, a boy-pope, created at the age of ten or twelve years, spent his days in debauchery, rapine, and murder, and sold the apostolic see for £1500 to Gregory VI., a man like-minded with himself. Boniface VIII., A. D. 1294, denied the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the immortality of the soul, entered the popedom, it was said, like a fox, reigned like a lion, and died like a dog. John XXII., deposed by the council of Constance, was a rank infidel, and was convicted of crimes so many and so enormous, that the indictment against him "contained all mortal sins, and an infinity of abominations." Alexander VI., A. D. 1492, revelled in all uncleanness, and died of poison, which he had prepared for others, and drank by mistake. But time would fail us to tell of the heresies and crimes, including such as ought not to be named, which have inflicted indelible disgrace on a large number of the Roman pontiffs, especially those who lived in the middle ages. And yet we are told by the church of Rome, that these men were the successors of the apostles, and that from them, and them only, true authority in the church of God is to be derived!

This is not all. The succession has been repeatedly interrupted and broken. Not to mention the scenes of violence which occurred at contested elections, often issuing in the

loss of many lives, it may suffice to refer to the great schisms in the papacy, when two or more occupants seized St. Peter's chair, each claiming infallibility and universal power. In 1044, Sylvester, Gregory, and Benedict called themselves popes, severally assuming the rights and honours of the see of Rome—"a three-headed beast," says a Roman Catholic writer, "rising from the gates of hell." Innocent II., elected in 1130, was opposed by Anacletus, and on his death, eight years afterwards, by Victor II. Alexander III. occupied the chair from 1159 to 1181, but his pretensions were denied, and four rivals, Victor, Paschal, Calistus, and Innocent, successively divided with him the obedience of the church. The great western schism, which lasted fifty-one years, from 1378 to 1429, spread dissension, crime, and war through all Europe, and presented to the world an awfully disgusting spectacle of ecclesiastical fury. Urban VI. was acknowledged by Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, and England; Clement VII. by France, Spain, Scotland, Sicily, and Cyprus. Both were regarded by their respective adherents as vicars of Christ on earth, heads of the church, infallible judges of controversy, and fountains of priestly power. Their successors assumed the same prerogatives. Ordinations and appointments, such as were held peculiar to the holy see, were made by each. Their mutual hatred burned with the fiercest flame. Curses in abundance were denounced. Urban anathematized Clement, and Clement, Urban. Each pope annulled the acts of his rival. Excommunications, interdicts, assassinations, and crimes of every degree, diversified the history of those unhappy times: nor was it till two general councils had been convened, at Pisa and Constance, for the express purpose of putting an end to the schism, that peace was restored, and distracted Christendom reposed in quiet under the sway of one ruler. But where was the apostolical succession? Who among these popes and anti-popes were the lawful occupants of the see of Rome? In what line was the holy unction preserved? Fix it where you will, the acts of the other party were null and void from the beginning. The bishops made by a false pope were no bishops. The priests ordained by a false bishop were no priests. The sacraments administered by a false priest were no sacraments. Where will the mischief end? Can any Roman Catholic be assured of the validity of his own baptism? For any thing

he can tell, the ordination of the priest who baptized him was conferred by one whose succession is traceable to an anti-pope, and is therefore corrupted at the very source. Here is perpetual cause for doubt and despair. Such questions as these are sorely perplexing to Romish divines. Many artful solutions of the difficulty have been proposed. but it is easier to cut the knot than to untie it; ingenuity and sophistry cannot overturn plain facts.

But the church is asserted to be apostolic! "She derives her doctrines, her communion, her orders and mission from the apostles of Christ." We shall see. Monachism* was

* Bingham ("Christian Antiquities," book vii.) gives the following account of the origin of Monachism:—"In the Decian persecution, which was about the middle of the third century, many persons in Egypt, to avoid the fury of the storm, fled to the neighbouring deserts and mountains, where they found not only a safe retreat, but also more time and liberty to exercise themselves in acts of piety and divine contemplations; which sort of life, though at first forced upon them by necessity, became so agreeable to some of them, that, when the persecution was over, they would not return to their ancient habitations again, but chose rather to continue in those cottages, or cells, which they had made themselves in the wilderness. The first and most noted of these were Paul and Antonius, two famous Egyptians, whom, therefore, St. Jerome calls 'the fathers of the Christian hermits.' But as yet there were no bodies, or communities, of men embracing this life, nor any monasteries built, or any regular societies formed into any method of government; but only a few single persons, scattered here and there in the deserts of Egypt, till Pachomius, in the peaceable reign of Constantine, when the persecutions were ended, procured some monasteries to be built in Thebais, in Egypt, from whence the custom of living as regulars in societies was followed, by degrees, in other parts of the world in the succeeding ages."

A modern writer observes:—"The professed object of the monks was the attainment of superior degrees of holiness. For this purpose they withdrew from the world, vexed their bodies with long fasts and painful austerities, wore scanty or uneasy clothing, made of skins or rough sackcloth, and instituted lengthened exercises of devotion. There were many varieties of the monastic life. Some lived in convents, and supported themselves by manual labour; others chose the solitude of the wilderness, living on roots and similar coarse fare, and dwelling in 'dens and caves of the earth,' far remote from the usual haunts of men. Many practised abstinence and mortification in the sight of their fellow creatures, and enjoyed the admiration which their supposed sanctity secured. This class consisted chiefly of bishops and their clergy, who, in many instances, lived together in the metropolitan city, and adopted monastic rules to such an extent as was deemed compatible with the discharge of their public duties. Numbers wandered from place to place, gaining

established in the fourth century: is that apostolic? Purgatory and prayers to the saints began to be inculcated in the fifth century: are they apostolic? In the eighth century image worship prevailed over opposition; transubstantiation was invented in the ninth; indulgences were not given earlier than the tenth; the forced celibacy of all the clerical orders was definitively enjoined in the eleventh;* communion in one kind came into practice in the twelfth; auricular confession was decreed in the thirteenth; the sacraments were declared to be seven in number by the council of Trent, in the sixteenth; and by the same council many other abominations were sanctioned and confirmed. But in vain will you look for these things, or for the doctrine of merit, the Divine authority of the apocrypha, or the various orders of the Romish hierarchy, from the acolyte† upwards, in the writings of the New Testament. Where, then, is the apostolicity of the church of Rome?

II. It is affirmed that "the church is holy."

There was indeed a time when the church of Rome was holy. She was holy when the apostle Paul wrote his epistle "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints," Rom. i. 7; who were "dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord;" "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another," Rom. vi. 11; xv. 14. In these respects, however, there was no difference between that church and other churches, for all were "churches of the saints."

a livelihood by begging. A large proportion of the whole indulged the wildest extravagances, both in opinion and practice, and forfeited all claim to scriptural piety. All these modes of life were embraced by women as well as men, and soon became extremely popular.

"The progress of monasticism was distinguished for several centuries by unexampled prosperity, and its ordinary attendant, corruption. Replenished with wealth, which the ignorant and superstitious people lavished upon them, thinking to gain favour with God thereby, the monks indulged in every kind of licentious excess, till they were as infamous for vice, as their predecessors had been renowned for piety. Reformation was frequently attempted, and many new orders arose, professing, at first, great zeal for purity, and adopting the strictest modes of discipline, verging sometimes to the extremity of human endurance. But these also soon shared the general fate, and sunk to the same low level of shameless sensuality."—Cramp's Text-Book of Popery, p. 315.

* Marriage is forbidden to every member of the clerical order in the church of Rome, of whatever degree.

† The acolyte waits on the priest during the celebration of mass.

How long this holy state continued is not now the subject of discussion. It is enough to know that, in process of time, "the gold became dim, the fine gold was changed." The following facts are attested by unexceptionable witnesses.

When wealth and power began to be connected with Christian bishoprics, a vacancy in the see of Rome was commonly signalized by disorders and crimes of fearful magnitude. So fierce was the contest, for instance, on occasion of the election of Liberius, (A. D. 353,) that many lives were sacrificed, and priests were slain even in the churches. Similar occurrences took place in the next age: simony was openly practised, and murders, robberies, and numberless other evils were perpetrated. Such proceedings soon ceased to be singular; the records of papal elections teem with them.

In the sixth century, while Vigilius, "a wicked man," as the Roman Catholic historian, Baronius, calls him, presided over the church, there were every where contentions, strife, quarrelling, and discord. Fifty years after, we find Pope Gregory the Great writing thus:—"I think, beloved brethren, that God suffers greater evil from none than he does from the priests; when he beholds those whom he appointed to correct others, presenting in themselves examples of depravity; when we sin, who ought to restrain sin. For the most part (and this is still worse) the priests, who ought to give of their own, seize the property of others; and if they see any who walk humbly and chastely, they ridicule them. Consider, therefore, what will be the state of the flocks when the shepherds become wolves."

We pass on to the tenth century. "What was then"—(they are the words of Baronius, himself a cardinal)—"the face of the holy Roman church! How exceedingly foul was it, when most powerful and abandoned women ruled at Rome, at whose will sees were changed, bishops appointed, and, horrible as it is to hear and unfit to be spoken, false pontiffs, their lovers, intruded into the chair of Peter, who are only written in the catalogue of Roman pontiffs for the sake of marking the times. Lust, relying on the secular power, mad, and stimulated with the rage of dominion, claimed every thing for itself. Then, as it seems, Christ evidently was in a deep sleep in the ship, when by the violence of these winds the ship itself was covered with the waves."

The eleventh century presents no sign of improvement. Those who were "bound by their office to correct the sins of others, sinned worse than the rest, being themselves blind leaders of the blind; in morals, Pharisees; in works, Sadducees; in vileness, Nicolaitans; in avarice, Simoniacs." "I scarcely find any bishops," said Gregory VII., "who are lawful either in their entrance or mode of life, who govern Christian people from the love of Christ, and not from worldly ambition; and among all secular princes I know of none who prefer God's honour to their own, and righteousness to gain. In short, those among whom I dwell, the Romans, namely, the Lombards and the Normans, I hold to be, in some respects, worse than Jews and pagans, as I often tell them."

"The Roman church," said John of Salisbury, A.D. 1179, "which is the mother of all churches, does not so much show herself to be a mother to other churches as a stepmother. The scribes and Pharisees sit in her, laying intolerable burdens upon the shoulders of men, which they do not touch with their fingers. They domineer over the clergy, nor are they a pattern to the flock."

Pope Innocent III. addressed the general council of Lateran, A.D. 1215, in these words:—"It is time, as the blessed apostle saith, that judgment should begin with the house of the Lord, 1 Peter iv. 17. For all the corruption which is in the people chiefly proceeds from the clergy, since if the anointed priest sins he causes the people to sin; for when the laity behold them living vilely and outrageously, through their example they fall into iniquity and wickedness. And when they are reproved by any one, they immediately excuse themselves, saying, 'The son must do what he sees his father do, and it is enough if the disciple resembles his master.' The saying of the prophet is fulfilled, 'As is the people so is the priest.'"

Many other testimonies might be produced. The reformation of the church, both "in her head and members," was loudly demanded by all Christendom in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Some attempts were made, but that they failed of success may be gathered from the speech of one of the bishops assembled at the fifth council of Lateran, A. D. 1513. "I have always," said he, "deemed it to be necessary, first of all, that the head of our faith, I mean the Roman church, be quieted, restored, and reformed.

Faith, piety, and religion have grown so cold in our times, I might almost say have become so corrupted, that scarcely any vestiges of them remain. The faith and fervour which dwelt in the minds of our forefathers have so cooled in us, now that the church, free from the persecutions of heretics, enjoys the greatest liberty, that we may truly say, with Jeremiah, 'From the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed,' the beauty, namely, of innocence and chastity. The priests and the ancients have despised God. There is no law; there is no commandment; judgment is perverted."*

We shall be told, that these are tales of ancient times; that since the era of the Reformation such enormities have been unknown; and that the Roman Catholic church can now challenge as rigid scrutiny as any other professedly Christian communities. We might reply, that this is nothing to the purpose, for she chooses to stand on her apostolicity and holiness, and dares us to the proof of the contrary. She claims uninterrupted succession and unsullied purity, and we meet the assertion by unveiling her shame. But allowing all that may be asked for on the score of modern reformation, and taking the church's testimony of herself, let us in the first place ask, What is holiness? Does it consist in bodily mortifications—in fasts—scourging—pilgrimages to supposed holy places—crossings—confession to a priest—severe penance—image worship, and confidence in saintly intercession? If so, Roman Catholics are certainly the holiest beings on earth, and none can dispute their pretensions. Our appeal must be to "the law and the testimony." Scripture tells us, that to be holy is to "put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;" to "set our affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God;" to "look not at the things which are seen, and temporal, but at the things which are not seen, and eternal;" to be "clothed with humility;" to possess and exhibit the "fruits of the Spirit," which are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;" and to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, (See Eph.

* The above cited passages are extracted from Finch's "Sketch of the Romish Controversy," where they are to be seen in the original Latin.

iv. 22, 32; Col. iii. 1, 2; 2 Cor. iv. 18; 1 Peter v. 5; Gal. v. 22, 23; Titus ii. 12.) Nothing can compensate for the want of the dispositions and habits referred to in these descriptions. No gifts, however splendid; no sacrifices, however costly; no penances, however severe; no services, however hard or protracted, can be substituted for the "sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth."

The question then is, whether the church of Rome is so distinguished above all other communities, in these respects, as to be not only, in general, free from corruption, but emphatically holy, and solely entitled to the appellation, so that no other church is holy in comparison with her; and that on account of her surpassing purity she is singly and alone worthy to be called the church of Christ. That is the simple question; and it is to be answered by reference to facts. Be it so. We are quite willing to abide by the impartial judgment of mankind. Go, then, where Popery is to be seen in all its simplicity and glory. We will not ask the reader to form his opinion from a view of the Roman Catholic population of London and our great towns; we will not draw a picture of the state of society in Ireland; but let Portugal, Spain, and Italy, the countries which of all others are the most free from the contamination of Protestantism, and where Popery is to be seen as it is, be selected for the purpose of the inquiry; and let that inquiry embrace all classes—the clergy, the laity, the inmates of cottages, and mansions, and monasteries. The reports of trustworthy men who have visited those countries during the present century are before the public. Are Roman Catholic champions willing to abide by their verdict?

III. It is asserted that "the church is one."

The meaning of this is, that the church, that is, the church of Rome, has in all ages held the same doctrines, and practised the same rites, and never varied, enlarged, or lessened its creed, or its mode of worship. A more false assertion cannot be made.

The Nicene Creed, originally framed and published by the council of Nice, A. D. 325, was regarded for many ages as the depository of the faith of the church. All who held that creed were considered Christians, notwithstanding their differences on many minor points. But when the word of God fell into disrepute, and spiritual worship was supplanted by superstition, numerous errors crept in, which gradually

acquired prevalence, and were at length formed into articles of faith. The belief of the church in the sixteenth century, as finally settled by the council of Trent, differed materially from that of the church in the fourth, as it was declared at Nice. Pope Pius IV. condensed the decisions at Trent into a creed, to which his name is now attached. It was published in 1564, and is appealed to by all Roman Catholics as containing an authorised summary of their faith. The Nicene Creed is included in it, after which come the following articles :—

"I most firmly admit and embrace apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other constitutions and observances of the same church.

"I also admit the sacred Scriptures, according to the sense which the holy mother church has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; nor will I ever take or interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.

"I profess also, that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and for the salvation of mankind, though all are not necessary for every one—namely, baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, order,* and matrimony, and that they confer grace; and of these, baptism, confirmation, and order, cannot be reiterated without sacrilege.

"I also receive and admit the ceremonies of the Catholic church, received and approved in the solemn administration of all the above-said sacraments.

"I receive and embrace all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the holy council of Trent, concerning original sin and justification.

"I profess likewise, that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrifice of the eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and Divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic church calls transubstantiation.

"I confess also, that under either kind alone, whole and entire, Christ and a true sacrament is received.

* That is, holy orders.

"I constantly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detained therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.

"Likewise, that the saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invocated; that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be venerated.

"I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, and of the mother of God, ever virgin, and also of the other saints, are to be had and retained; and that due honour and veneration are to be given them.

"I also affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

"I acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolical Roman church, the mother and mistress of all churches; and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman bishop, the successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.

"I also profess and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy council of Trent; and likewise I also condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies whatsoever, condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the church.

"This true Catholic faith, out of which none can be saved, which I now freely profess and truly hold, I, N., promise, vow, and swear most constantly to hold and profess the same, whole and entire, with God's assistance, to the end of my life; and to procure, as far as lies in my power, that the same shall be held, taught, and preached by all who are under me, or are entrusted to my care, by virtue of my office."

Mark that, reader! When the apostle Paul addressed the trembling jailor at Philippi, he said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31; but pope Pius says, You must believe in tradition, the seven sacraments, human merit, the mass, transubstantiation, purgatory, indulgences, and the intercession of the saints; these constitute the true Catholic faith, out of which none can be saved, let who will advance the contrary! Who shall be trusted—the apostle or the pope?

Now, it is demonstrable, that the church in 325 did not hold the articles propounded by the church in 1564, and the belief of which is said to be necessary to salvation.

This assertion might be substantiated, were it needful, by passages from the best writers of the Romish church, many of them accredited saints, containing sentiments entirely opposed to the papal creed.* What becomes, then, of the boasted unity of the church? Either the creed of Nice erred in defect, or that of Trent in excess. We know very well that the latter council claimed apostolical authority for its decisions, and maintained with unparalleled effrontery that even the additional articles had been so held "from the beginning;" but every student of ecclesiastical history is aware that this statement is utterly without foundation. The novelties of Trent were unknown to the ancient church.

If a member of the council of Nice could rise from the dead, no Roman Catholic priest would admit him to communion.

One more remark may be made. While all members of the Roman Catholic church professedly hold the same creed, their interpretations of many parts of it are as various and opposite as possible. An instance or two may be given. The decree of Trent on justification had not long been published when two works appeared, written by divines who had assisted at the deliberations of the council; one of them, Ambrose Catharin, maintained that a believer may acquire an absolute certainty of his being in a justified state; Soto, his opponent, denied it; and both appealed to the decree of the council! The Dominicans and Franciscans disagreed, and still disagree, respecting the supposed immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. Jansenists and Jesuists contended bitterly in the controversy about Divine grace. As long as these and many other variations exist, and till there be a uniformity of interpretation, as well as of creed, let us hear no more of the unity of the church.

But we need not press these difficulties and objections. Allow the boasted unity. What then? The agreement of numbers in maintaining error and superstition furnishes no argument in their favour; otherwise Paganism or Mohammedanism may be proved to be Divine; for assuredly their adherents are more numerous than those of any form of Christianity.

IV. The church, it is said, is "catholic."

It is hardly necessary to observe, that by "catholic" is meant "universal." The "Catechism of the Council of

* See Faber's Difficulties of Romanism.

Trent," p. 101, says, "Unlike republics of human institution, or the conventicles of heretics, she is not circumscribed within the limits of any one kingdom, nor confined to the members of any one society of men; but embraces, within the amplitude of her love, all mankind, whether barbarians or Scythians, slaves or freemen, male or female." "She is also called universal, because all who desire eternal salvation must cling to and embrace her, like those who entered the ark, to escape perishing in the flood. This, therefore, is to be taught as a most just criterion, to distinguish the true from a false church."

These assertions will require to be examined at some length.

1. The predictions of the word of God have prepared us to expect an extensive diffusion of error and superstition in the latter days. "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth," 1 Tim. iv. 1—3. See also 2 Thess. ii. 3—10; Rev. xvii. On these passages we shall only observe, that their fulfilment in the history of the Roman Catholic church is too evident to be fairly questioned. The features of the grand apostasy are so correctly delineated, that we cannot be mistaken in the application. Nay, as if to prevent all dispute, we find the very locality of the imposture, the head-quarters of the man of sin, pointed out by the angel to the apostle John:—"The woman which thou sawest," and who had been before described as "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," "is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" meaning, of course, Rome, Rev. xvii. 18. We may wonder at the depth of the ways of God, and exclaim, as we contemplate the abominations of the mystical Babylon, "How long, Lord, how long!" but the wide-spread prevalence of the evil, the universality of the mighty mischief, cannot be denied, and need not perplex us. The prophecy is recorded among the true sayings of God, and the pen of history has unconsciously illustrated the visions of the Apocalypse.

2. It must be borne in mind, however, that Roman Catholic statements on this subject are not to be received

without examination. Popish writers would have us believe that Protestantism is a novelty, unknown in the church till the sixteenth century; that till then the faith of Rome, as it is now professed, had universally prevailed; and that if now and then a troublesome heresy arose, it was quickly detected and suppressed. But history tells a different tale. The Christianity of the New Testament, preserved from age to age, and still retaining its health and loveliness, is as unlike modern Popery as the genuine portrait differs from the hideous caricature. The faithful testimonies of God's servants against the usurpations of the papacy were coeval with the usurpations themselves. The errors and superstitions of the times were protested against by the adherents of Scripture long before Protestantism, as a distinctive appellation, was known. They were denounced by the Waldenses at a very early period, and with such success, that evangelical truth found supporters in nearly every European country; and in France the Romish temples were at one time almost deserted. There are many other and numerous divisions of professing Christians to be taken into the account, as so many witnesses against the alleged universality of the Roman church. The Greeks, defective as is their religion, stoutly oppose the tyranny of Rome, and condemn many of its distinguishing doctrines, and have existed as a separate church from the first moment when the church of Rome claimed universal power. The authority of the patriarch of Constantinople was owned, in the eleventh century, by sixty-five metropolitans, and more than six hundred bishops. In Russia, the Greek church is established by law; and in Turkey, Syria, and many eastern countries, the members of this community are found in great numbers. To these must be added the Nestorians, the Monophysitans, and the Armenians, who, although they agree not in all things with Protestants, and are sadly destitute, for the most part, of vital godliness, have never submitted their necks to the papal yoke. Also the Syrian churches discovered on the western coasts of India in the sixteenth century, and who had never heard of the pope till then, nor do they admit his authority now. They held all the leading tenets of the Reformation, and learned the doctrines of Rome only to execrate them. The inquisition thinned their numbers, but they are still a considerable body.

A learned modern writer thus sums up the evidence on

this point:—"The European, Asian, and African denominations that dissented from Popery, were four times more numerous than the partisans of Romanism, when, prior to the Reformation, the papacy shone in all its glory. Popery, instead of universality, which is its vain but empty boast, was never embraced by more than a fifth part of Christendom. The west, and especially the east, were crowded by the opponents of the Romish superstition, despotism, and absurdity. Superstition and error, indeed, except among the Waldenses, prevailed through the European nations, and reigned in the realms of the papacy with uncontrolled sway. Darkness, within its dominions, covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. But the Waldenses, who were numerous, held up, in the western world, a steady light, which shone through the surrounding obscurity, and illuminated, with its warming beams, the minds of many. The oriental Christians, more numerous than the Waldenses, and divided and disputing about minor matters of words and ceremony, opposed with firmness and unanimity the tyranny and corruptions of Romanism. All these overspreading the eastern and western world, and resisting the usurpations of pontifical despotism, far out-numbered the sons of European error, superstition, and Popery."*

3. Granting, nevertheless, the extensive prevalence of Popery, for it cannot be denied that its baneful influence is exerted over very many millions of our race, (some say ninety millions,) it will be instructive to consider some of the methods adopted by the church of Rome, in order to become catholic, or universal, and to perpetuate the power she has gained.

(1.) Ignorance.

We refer chiefly to ignorance of the Scriptures, the only authentic source of religious knowledge, and admitted to be so by every portion of the true church of Christ.

It has ever been the policy of the church of Rome to suppress or restrict the reading of the Bible. The light of revelation is too strong for her; it makes manifest her delusions, and exposes her loathsomeness. Hence the jealousy with which the Bible has been regarded, and the profound ignorance of its contents which still exists among Roman Catholics. It is sometimes said, in reply to these and similar assertions, that there is no general law of the church

* Edgar's Variations of Popery, p. 67

prohibiting the perusal of the Scriptures. That is partially true. The council of Toulouse, A. D. 1229, published the following canon:—"We prohibit also the permitting of the laity to have the books of the Old or New Testament, unless any one should wish, from a feeling of devotion, to have a psalter or breviary for divine service, or the hours of the blessed Mary. But we strictly forbid them to have the above-mentioned books in the vulgar tongue."* But that was only a provincial council, and consequently the decree could have no force beyond the district comprised in the dioceses of the bishops then assembled. Yet the spirit of the decree has pervaded the policy of Rome for many ages; and the enactment of the council of Trent amounts to a virtual prohibition of the inspired volume, since the Roman Catholic is not allowed to use the Scriptures without the written permission of a bishop, obtained on the recommendation of his priest, or confessor, which may be at any time recalled; and when he has obtained that permission, he is warned that he must not "dare to wrest the sacred Scriptures to his own sense of them, contrary to that which hath been held, and is still held, by holy mother church, whose right it is to judge of the true meaning and interpretation of Sacred Writ, or contrary to the unanimous consent of the fathers." The design of the council was to place as many difficulties in the way as possible; for they held, that "it is manifest from experience, that if the Holy Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue, be indiscriminately allowed to every one, the temerity of men will cause more evil than good to arise from it."† It is also worthy of remark, that the true spirit of Popery is not allowed to develope itself in Protestant countries. Here in England it would appear, that the Roman Catholic is under little restraint. The Bible is printed for his use, in English, though always with explanatory notes, as if it could not be trusted alone. But on the continent of Europe, and in other parts of the world, the system has full scope. Abridgments of Scripture history, mass-books, and similar productions, are circulated among Roman Catholics as Bibles; and great numbers regard them as such, being totally ignorant of the imposition

* Concil. Labbe and Cossart, tom. xxiii. p. 197.

† Fourth Rule of the "Congregation of the Index," a committee appointed by the council of Trent. There are ten rules; they were first published in March, 1564, and are always prefixed to the "Index of Prohibited Books."

that is practised upon them. "The Bible in Rome," says an excellent clergyman, in his account of a residence in that city, "is a strange and rare book. The only edition of it authorised to be sold here is in fifteen large volumes, which are filled with popish commentaries. Of course, none but the rich can purchase a copy of the sacred Scriptures. Indeed, very few of the common people here know what we mean by the Bible. The question was proposed the other day, by one of my fellow lodgers, to the lady from whom our lodgings are obtained, and who may be considered as a fair representative, in point of intelligence and religious information, of the middle class of society in Rome:—'If the people here generally had a copy of the Bible in their houses?' The reply was, 'O yes, all the religious people have.' She also added, that she had a very fine copy of the Bible, and immediately went to get it. When produced, it proved to be a mass book, with here and there a passage of Scripture, accompanied with Romish glosses and legends. When it was more fully explained to her what we meant by the Bible, she replied, 'O yes, I know what you mean; that book is in several of the libraries in Rome; and some persons who are very religious have also a copy of it.'"* The Rev. Mr. Fisk, an American missionary, when he was at Alexandria, in Egypt, had an interview with a Roman Catholic priest. "He showed me a Catholic prayer-book in English, and also what he called the Bible in Italian. It was the history of the Bible, written in other words, with omissions, abbreviations, and comments. I have seen a similar work in French, called 'The Bible Royaumont.' The general plan of these works is much like that of Jameson's Sacred History. The fathers are continually quoted as authorities in support of the expositions given. The grand fault respecting these books is, that the priests give them to the people under the name of the Bible; and the latter often do not know that there is any other Bible, or that these books differ in any respect from the real Scriptures."† Some Cochin-Chinese converts to Popery "being asked if they had read the Bible, replied in Chinese, 'It was forbidden, disapproved;' adding in French, 'It is contraband!'"‡ The word of God contraband! Such is the policy of the "holy Roman apos-

* Rome; its Wonders and its Worship. By the Rev. J. A. Clark, Rector of St. Andrews, Philadelphia, United States, p. 161.

† Bond's Life of Fisk, p. 175.

‡ Abeel's Journal of a Residence in China, p. 149.

tolic church!" "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved," John iii. 20.*

(2.) Superstition.

Mankind have always been pleased with outward forms and pomp in religion. Splendid garments, melodious music, grand processions, and frequent feasts, attracted the pagan multitude, gratified their low desires, and concealed from the eye of reason the deformities of idolatry. The corruption of the Christian church began here. When the restraints of the word of God were removed, and men claimed the right of invention in matters of religion, an opening was made for every form of superstition. The first appearances seemed harmless enough; but "will-worship," once introduced, advanced at a constantly increasing rate, till, at length, the cumbrous and complicated machinery of the Romish Church was substituted for the simple but acceptable sacrifices of prayer and praise. We do not wonder at the numerous conversions boasted of by Roman Catholic missionaries in heathen countries. The spirit of paganism is retained under another form: the essential qualities of the superstitions are the same. Repentance for sin, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the crucifixion of lust, and a life of scriptural holiness, on all which the Protestant missionary

* The Bishop of Chester related the following interesting anecdote at the Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, May 6, 1840:—"An Englishman residing in France was called upon by a lady who lived in the same town, but was otherwise unknown to him, and who, after introducing herself, requested him to furnish her with a copy of the Scriptures. 'A copy of the Scriptures,' she said, 'of your English Scriptures, such as you have in England.' 'Why,' said he, 'have you not a Bible?' 'No,' she replied, 'we have not the Bible; we have an abridgment of the history of the Bible: that is not the Bible; I want the Bible you Protestants have.' 'And why are you so anxious for it?' he naturally asked. 'A friend of mine,' she said, 'was lately travelling in England: he came home, and gave me a great account of the domestic happiness and tranquillity which that country enjoys in its families and households; so I could not but ask him to what he attributed this? He said he had given it much thought, much attention, and his belief was, that the general knowledge of the Bible which prevailed in England—it being read in many households, and in all the churches—this, he believed, was the real cause of the domestic happiness enjoyed in England beyond all other countries. And sir,' she added, 'that is what I want; I want peace and domestic tranquillity; and therefore I come to you, and request you to supply me with a Bible.'"

insists, are hard requirements. But it is no difficult thing to obtain assent to the articles of a meagre creed, and subjection to the guidance of a priest, who assures the new convert of his absolute safety, assumes the power to forgive sin, and promises heaven as the reward of submission; while the services to which he is invited dazzle the eye, please the ear, and gratify the self-righteous propensities of the carnal heart.

Saint-worship presents another important consideration. Fallen man has loved to identify himself with "gods many and lords many," and to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, Rom. i. 25. Account for the fact as we may, the fact itself remains. The pagan deified the lights of heaven, the productive agencies of nature, and the favourite heroes of war, or inventors of useful arts. Paganism has passed away, but its spirit is revived in Popery, and the love of creature-worship is as really indulged by those who bow before the images of the saints, as by the votaries of Diana of the Ephesians. The honour paid to these saints is supposed to render them propitious; the observance of their anniversaries and pilgrimages to their shrines are praiseworthy deeds; and thus the deluded Roman Catholic obtains on easy terms, as he vainly imagines, an increasing stock of merit and powerful patrons in heaven. The Irishman journeys to the holy well, or performs stations at Lough Dearg, and implores the aid of St Patrick;* the sailor invokes St. Nicholas, St. Francis, and a host of other ghostly helpers; tender mothers take their sickly infants, and sit at the shrine of St. Theodorus, expecting their restoration to health. One saint cures the fever, another the ague; in short, there is a saint to flee to under almost every disease with which the human frame is afflicted; the very banditti in Italy wear a picture of the Virgin and Child suspended from their necks, "to make their deaths easy,"† should they be cut off in their crimes. A system so flattering to the pride and self-love of the human heart, and which so exactly harmonizes with the ancient idolatry, might be expected to become popular.

As superstition rises, piety sinks. The creature cannot be religiously honoured but at the expense of the worship

* See Hardy's Holy Wells of Ireland. Dublin, 1836.

† Graham's Three Months' Residence in the Mountains East of Rome, pp. 155, 161

due to the "Lord of all." The pagan "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man," Rom. i. 23. The papist has, in effect, done the same. The saints take the place of the Most High, "the blessed and only Potentate." The devotee telling his beads counts one hundred and fifty ave marias to ten pater nosters, that is to say, the prayers offered to the virgin and to God respectively are as ten to one. The sum of £832. 12*s*. 3*d*. was given in one year at the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury; but at Christ's altar only £3. 2*s*. 6*d*. In the following year, the saint received £954. 6*s*. 3*d*., and the Saviour, nothing! This is characteristic.

It was foretold that the "man of sin" should be revealed by "power and signs and lying wonders," 2 Thess. ii. 3, 9. A more accurate description could not have been given. In these few words is contained the history of many a papal imposture. "Lying wonders" crowd the pages of the monkish historians. If they are to be believed, the Divine Being has continually disturbed the order of nature, and that on the most trivial occasions, for the benefit of the Romish church. And it is to be specially noted, that the alleged miracles were not wrought in defence of the great truths of the gospel, but for the purpose of sanctioning some modern dogma, or late invention. God is represented as suspending, from time to time, the laws of the universe in favour of the champions of purgatory, transubstantiation, and other absurdities. Would not such tales mightily confirm men in their attachment to the "Roman Catholic church," on behalf of which such great wonders were wrought? Investigation was not thought of in the dark ages: it was heresy to doubt the word of a priest, and mortal sin to disobey him. Even at this day there are some who ascribe superhuman powers to their spiritual guides, and deem them invested with a kind of almightiness. Who can wonder at it? If a few words pronounced by their lips can change bread into flesh, and wine into blood, what shall be thought impossible to them? A Protestant may smile at the folly, and weep over the profanity, of the system, and can hardly bring himself to believe that reasoning men could credit absurdities so gross and revolting; but it is nevertheless true, that implicit faith distinguishes Roman Catholics from all other sects. "I believe as the church believes" Every

thing is comprised in this; and the church has given her sanction to the lying legends of the saints, that her prerogatives and powers may be more readily admitted.

Akin to these enormities is the popish doctrine of indulgences. This is one of the most profitable inventions of the whole system. According to the theory of Rome, none but the most eminent saints go at once to heaven when they die. The majority are sent to purgatory, to pay the debt of temporal punishment yet due by them for their sins, and which is supposed to be left unsettled when the penalty of eternal death is remitted, on repentance and faith. Of the term of the continuance of souls in that dismal state we are profoundly ignorant; some will require more cleansing than others; but none can tell how long any one may have to remain in durance. The time, however, may be shortened, and the whole score wiped off. A treasure has been discovered, partly consisting of the merits of the Saviour, and partly of the goodness of great and eminent saints. Of this treasure the pope has the key. If sufficient inducements can be offered to his holiness, he will grant an indulgence, conveying remission of purgatorial pains for a number of years, or even for the whole period of punishment remaining to be fulfilled. This last is called a "plenary indulgence." It may even be arranged, that the benefits of the indulgence shall be applicable either to the party obtaining it, or to some one already in purgatory, for whose deliverance he is concerned. The terms vary. At Rome there are abundant facilities for securing the desired object. All who are present on Easter Sunday, when the pope appears in public, and blesses the thousands who throng the vacant space before St. Peter's, receive a plenary indulgence. "You may buy as many masses as will free your souls from purgatory for 29,000 years, at the church of St. John Lateran, on the festa of that saint; at Santa Bibiana, on All Souls' day, for 7000 years; at a church near the Basilica of St. Paul, and at another on the Quirinal Hill, for 10,000 and for 3,000 years, and at a very reasonable rate. But it is in vain to particularize; for the greater part of the principal churches in Rome and the neighbourhood are spiritual shops for the sale of the same commodity."* Every twenty-five years there is a jubilee, when, for certain prescribed services, a plenary indulgence, clearing away all

* Rome in the Nineteenth Century, ii. pp. 265, 270.

arrears up to the time of receiving it, may be obtained. The same favour may also be procured every year in England, on Christmas day, and the twelve days following; from Palm Sunday to Low Sunday, inclusively; and at some other times duly specified in the papal grants, on the following conditions:—"1. That the faithful confess their sins, with sincere repentance, to a priest approved by the bishop. 2. That they worthily receive the holy communion. 3. That they visit some chapel or oratory, where mass is celebrated, and pray to God for the peace of his church. 4. That they be in a readiness of mind to assist the poor with alms in proportion to their abilities; or to frequent catechism and sermons as often as they can do so without great inconvenience; or to afford their assistance to the sick, or to such as are near their end, out of the motive of Christian charity." It is kindly added, to make it quite easy, that these works of mercy need not be done on the same day with the communion; all that is required is, "that persons be then in a disposition or readiness of mind to do these things, or some of them at least, when they may have an opportunity."* Special services rendered to the church will also obtain for the fortunate party a share in the blessing. A case of this sort has just occured. A celebrated Roman Catholic architect having "assisted indefatigably in the erection of new churches, both by furnishing designs for them, which prove his distinguished talents, and superintending their erection," has received from the pope, "as a slight testimony of his grateful acknowledgments," "a medal of the five saints canonized in the last canonization of the 26th May, 1839," and also a rosary, blessed by his holiness, to which are annexed various indulgences, for each time of its being recited.†

Again we remark, that none need wonder at the prevalence of Popery. It is so congenial with the depraved propensities of the human heart, that its success cannot be matter of surprise. True, it binds heavy burdens on men's shoulders; but in return for their willing subjection it allows them to share in accomplishing the great work of salvation. Man dislikes obligation; he would rather work for life than receive it as the free gift of God; he prefers his

* Catholic Directory for the year 1840 pp 1. 2.

† Dublin Review, No. xv. p. 287. The letter accompanying the medal and rosary is dated January 2, 1840.

own goodness to Divine grace. Popery indulges his delusion, and takes advantage of it. Let him only submit to her thraldom, and do her bidding, and he shall have all his wishes. He may purchase his release, merit it, work it out. A striking accordance with the description of Jeremiah: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so," Jer. v. 31. Alas! alas! how many thousands die every year, trusting to their own righteousness, and go into eternity "with a lie in their right hand."

(3.) Persecution.

The history of the church of Rome is written in blood. When heathen persecution ceased, and power passed over from paganism to Christianity, the church was not slow in learning how to wield carnal weapons. Alleged heretics were treated as criminals deserving punishment; and many of them, when they had the means, retorted in the same manner on their adversaries. No controversy was settled without calling in the secular arm: the sword of steel was more trusted in than the sword of the Spirit.

In this unholy warfare the popes of Rome have acquired a bad pre-eminence. Assuming the headship over all men, of whatsoever rank or degree, earthly governments have become creatures of their pleasure, and kings have meekly executed their commands. Excommunication, at first only a spiritual punishment, was soon turned into a weapon of tremendous power, inflicting on its hapless victim the forfeiture of his civil rights and privileges. Excommunication applied to individuals; the interdict affected provinces and nations. When John, king of England, quarrelled with pope Innocent III., the pontiff threatened to visit the kingdom with this, the most dreadful manifestation of his displeasure, unless he submitted. "John swore that if it came, he would banish all the clergy to Rome, confiscate their property, and mutilate every Roman priest of his eyes and nose. The interdict was published; and, conformably to its orders, Divine service ceased in the churches, the bells were taken down, all ecclesiastical functions were suspended, and no one was interred in consecrated cemeteries or with religious rites. After two years' contest, the pope, finding the king still unsubdued, but unpopular, ventured to the extremest step of his assumed authority; he excommunicated John, absolved the people from their oath of allegiance, and soon

afterwards deposed him. He commissioned the king of France to take his crown, and even called on the warriors of all countries to make a crusade against him."* The result is well known. John was compelled to yield, resigned his kingdom to the pope, and actually became a vassal of the holy see. Few monarchs could long withstand a foe, who, by one stroke of his pen, could free subjects from their allegiance, and who claimed to be "prince over all people, and all kingdoms, to pluck up, to destroy, to scatter, to consume, to plant and to build."† Like Nebuchadnezzar, "Whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down," Dan. v. 19.

But who can describe the horrors of papal vengeance? Who can depict, in suitable colours, the features of the woman "drunk with the blood of the saints?" How shall we tell of the exactions, imprisonments, tortures, exile, and murders—the well-known and approved methods of suppressing heresy and defending the so-called Catholic faith—which have been inflicted age after age by men wearing the garb of sanctity, and pretending to be shepherds of Christ's flock? The heart sickens at the detail; nor would we revive the memory of these atrocities, were it not that so far from being abuses of the system, they constitute its very essence and spirit; and, however politic it may be deemed in these times to denounce them, would be perpetrated again were power to put them in execution once more possessed.

The Albigenses and Waldenses have been mentioned before. What means were employed to convince them of their errors, and restore them to the church? A crusade was published against them, A. D. 1297. Pardon and heaven were promised to all who should enlist in the service. Tens of thousands rushed to the conflict, eager to expiate their sins by shedding the blood of the heretics. And blood was poured out like water. Four hundred men and women were burned alive at Carcassone, and fifty were hanged. The entire population of the city of Beziers, amounting to fifteen thousand persons, together with many thousands more, who had fled to the city from the surrounding villages,

* Sharon Turner's History of England during the Middle Ages, i. 412.

† Pope Pius the Fifth's Bull of Excommunication against Queen Elizabeth

were massacred without mercy. "This whole multitude," says Sismondi, "at the moment when the crusaders became masters of the gates, took refuge in the churches; the great cathedral of St. Nicaise contained the greater number. The canons, clothed with their choral habits, surrounded the altar, and sounded the bells, as if to express their prayers to the furious assailants; but these supplications of brass were as little heard as those of the human voice." It will be perceived, from this description, that the population of Beziers consisted partly of Roman Catholics; but they also were involved in the common destruction; for when the knights of the army inquired of the papal legate, Arnold Amalric, abbot of Citeaux, how they should distinguish the Roman Catholics from the heretics, he replied, "Kill them all: the Lord will know well those who are his!" The historian proceeds: "The bells ceased not to sound, till of that immense multitude which had taken refuge in the church, the last had been massacred. Neither were those spared who had sought an asylum in the other churches: seven thousand dead bodies were counted in that of the Magdalen alone. When the crusaders had massacred the last living creature in Beziers, and had pillaged the houses of all that they thought worth carrying off, they set fire to the city, in every part at once, and reduced it to a vast funereal pile. Not a house remained standing, not a human being alive."* Similar horrors distinguished the progress of the army in other parts of the country. Four hundred years afterwards these scenes were renewed, though upon a smaller scale, in the vallies of Piedmont. "In one place they mercilessly tortured not less than an hundred and fifty women and their children, chopping off the heads of some, and dashing the brains of others against the rocks. And in regard to those whom they took prisoners, from fifteen years old and upwards, who refused to go to mass, they hanged some, and nailed others to the trees by their feet, with their heads downwards."† It was on this occasion that Milton wrote the following sonnet:—

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
E'en them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones,

* Sismondi's History of the Crusades against the Albigenses, p. 36
† Jones's History of the Waldenses, vol. ii. 326.

Forget not; in thy book record their groans,
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who having learn'd thy way
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

When the Reformation shed its lustre over Europe, and revived the forgotten truths and neglected worship of the New Testament, even Spain and Italy began to rejoice in the light. Men of God were raised up, who "loved not their lives unto the death," but nobly risked them in the endeavour to evangelize those haunts of superstition and ignorance. But how were they treated? How did the "*Holy* Catholic Church" vindicate her claims, and ward off the attack? By letting loose the furies of the Inquisition. The tale need not be told here. It is sufficient to state, that the policy adopted was successful. Spain and Italy are at this day more deeply sunk than most European countries in ignorance, superstition, infidelity, and licentiousness.*

The history of religion in France affords another melancholy illustration of fiendish depravity. Who has not heard of the horrible massacres perpetrated in that country, in the sixteenth century, in defence of Popery? Men, women, and children were indiscriminately slaughtered. Some were killed with the sword; others were hurled from high rocks, and dashed to pieces; or hanged, or roasted over slow fires; or thrown on the points of pikes and daggers. Sucking infants were snatched from their mother's arms, and killed with bludgeons. At one place sixty men and thirty women surrendered, on condition that their lives should be spared, and were immediately murdered in cold blood. At another, five hundred women were forced into a barn, which was then set on fire, and when any of them attempted to rush out, they were thrust back by spears and halberts, so that they were all consumed. These atrocities were surpassed, if possible, by the massacre of St. Bartholomew, August 24, 1572, which was the result of a design deliberately formed for the utter extinction of

* See Dr. M'Crie's interesting volumes containing the history of the rise and suppression of the Reformation in Spain and Italy.

Protestantism in France. At midnight the tocsin tolled the signal of destruction, and the carnage which was then begun lasted seven days. The king, Charles IX., of infamous memory, encouraged the murderers in their work of destruction, shouting to them with all his might, "Kill, kill!" The queen gazed with delight on thousands of naked bodies, covered with wounds, and weltering in their gore. The Seine flowed with blood, and bore on its surface hundreds of dead bodies, spreading horror and infection through the country. Five thousand persons were murdered in Paris, and at least twenty thousand more in different parts of France. Papists gloried in the deed. The murderers, tutored by their priests, thought they were doing God service. The parliament applauded the king's wisdom and energy. The king, lost to all sense of shame, ordered a medal to be coined to perpetuate the memory of the event, having on one side a representation of himself, sitting on the throne, and treading on dead bodies; and on the reverse the arms of France, with this inscription, *Pietas excitavit justitiam*—"Piety excited justice."*

But how did the pope, the minister of mercy, the pretended successor of the meek and lowly Jesus, the holy father of Christendom—how did he receive the news of these diabolical doings? Did he weep over the sufferings of his fellow creatures? Did he execrate the monsters who inflicted them? Far from it. He rejoiced in the work of blood. He went in public procession to church, to praise God for it. He congratulated the king on the accomplishment of an exploit "so long meditated, and so happily executed, for the good of religion." He caused a medal to be struck, in perpetual remembrance of so godly an action, bearing on one side his own effigies, and on the other a representation of the slaughter of the Huguenots; (see the engraving on the title-page;) and he ordered an eminent artist to execute three paintings, representing the bloody deed, as ornaments for his own palace, where they are still to be seen. These are the tender mercies of Rome!

Our own beloved country has not escaped. John Wickliff, indeed, the noble pioneer of the reforming band, was spared the suffering which the vengeance of his enemies would have inflicted, and died quietly in his bed. They could only disinter his remains, forty years after his death, burn them

* Rapin's History of England, book xvii.

to ashes, and cast them into the Swift, a neighbouring brook. "This brook," the historian Fuller observes, "hath conveyed his ashes into the Avon; the Avon into the Severn; the Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wickliff are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." His successors were called to seal the truth with their blood. The dungeons in which the reformers endured tortures and lingering death are empty now, and the fires of Smithfield have long ceased to blaze. But it must not be forgotten, that those dungeons were once filled, and those fires often kindled. Sawtree, Badby, Lambert, Frith, Rogers, Tyndal, Bradford, Cranmer, Latimer, Hooper, Philpot, Ridley, and many others, by whose untiring zeal the truths of the blessed gospel obtained firm footing in the land, and who sealed those truths with their blood will be held in everlasting remembrance. We rejoice in the light; let us not be unmindful of the sufferings and sacrifices by which it was at first diffused among us.

Great as were those sufferings, they bore no comparison with those of the friends of truth in the Netherlands, in the same age. The emperor, Charles v., strove to quench the light of the Reformation by measures of unrelenting barbarity. He ordered all who favoured the doctrines of Luther to be put to death without mercy; the men to be beheaded, and the women to be buried alive or burned. He established the Inquisition, and sent the barbarous duke of Alva to waste the country by fire and sword. The wretch boasted of having executed eighteen thousand Protestants in six weeks. The whole number massacred for their religion in the Netherlands, in the course of a few years, was little short of a hundred thousand!

And let it not be imagined, that these events were accidental outbreaks of violence, or that they were inconsistent with the spirit and tendency of the papal system. Nor let any one endeavour to evade the force of the argument against Popery, by a reference to the encouragement of persecution by Protestants. If Protestants persecute, (and the fact is confessed and deplored,) they persecute in spite of their professed principles, and in opposition to them; but papists hang and burn heretics by rule. Persecution is the base-born child of the Reformation; it is the natural offspring of Popery. It is an indisputable maxim with Roman Catholics,

that the church cannot err. She has again and again decreed the extermination of heretics. This was done with the greatest solemnity, and in the most express terms, at the fourth council of Lateran, A. D. 1215, the twelfth general council, when all heretics were excommunicated, anathematized, and condemned, and "ordered to be delivered to the secular powers to receive due punishment; and the secular powers, of all ranks and degrees, were directed publicly to swear that they would exert themselves to the utmost in defence of the faith, and extirpate all heretics, denounced by the church, who should be found in their territories."* The Catechism of the Council of Trent, the last general council of the church, declares that heretics and schismatics, though they have left the church, are still subject to her jurisdiction, and are "liable to have judgment passed on their opinions, to be visited with punishments, and denounced with anathema;"† and every Roman Catholic receives pope Pius's creed, binding him to "profess and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy council of Trent; and also to condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies whatsoever, condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the church." This is the unrepealed law of the papacy. The faithful records of history tell us how well it has been obeyed.

We have now examined, at some length, the claims of the Roman church, to be considered and called "catholic," and pointed out the means by which she has sought to justify her pretensions, and confirm her rule. We have also inquired into the propriety of the appellations "holy," "apostolic," "one," and "catholic," or universal, so constantly applied to her by her adherents; and have succeeded, we trust, in showing that these high-sounding titles are utterly misplaced. If prophecy be Divine, and history true, the church of Rome is not "apostolic," for she has forsaken the plain paths of truth and righteousness, set out by the first followers of the Lamb. She is not "holy," for her superstitions are put in the place of spiritual-minded-

* Concil. Labbe et Cossart, tom. xxii. p. 987, 990. The entire canon may be seen, translated into English, in Cramp's Text-Book of Popery, p. 412, 415.

† Catechism of the Council of Trent. Ed. Donovan, p. 96.

ness, and her godliness mainly consists in "bodily exercise, which profiteth nothing." She is not "one," for her avowed creed is a patchwork of many centuries' making, and her greatest doctors differ in explaining it; while very many, by whom it is outwardly held, abjure it in their hearts. She is not "catholic," for she does not monopolize the profession of Christianity, nor is her sway owned by the majority of Christians. Evangelical Protestantism in some of its forms (all agreeing in the essential truths of the gospel) is nearly as widely diffused as Popery. The Roman Catholic denomination is, at best, but one of the many sects into which Christendom is divided.

We should smile at the contemptible arrogance of the party, and suffer them to weary themselves in the vanity of their boasting, were it not that it is a question of life or death. The salvation of souls is concerned. If Popery be the religion of the Bible, all Protestants are going to hell. If Popery be an abomination and an imposture, pretending to wear the mask of heavenly truth, and this we fearlessly affirm, then let all Roman Catholics beware. Their position is perilous in the extreme. Some, indeed, "know not the depths of Satan." But let the "leaders of the people, who cause them to err"—and those who "trust to their own righteousness," relying on their fasts, their alms, their confessions, their penances—take heed to themselves: for the former will be found to be "forgers of lies, physicians of no value;" and the latter may discover, when it is too late, that since they have not "submitted themselves to the righteousness of God," "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." (See Rev. ii. 24; Isa. ix. 16; Job xiii. 4; Rom. x. 3; Heb. x. 26, 27.) Awful indeed is the language of the inspired apostle:—"They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.

Our observations may seem harsh and severe; yet are they "words of truth and soberness." Innumerable facts establish the correctness of our assertions, and complete the demonstration, that Popery realizes the description of the "man of sin" given by the apostle Paul, and exhibits

all the features of the apostasy he has so strikingly delineated. It is, from first to last, a system of opposition to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Is the Saviour the great Prophet of the church, whose coming was foretold by Moses, Deut. xviii. 15, 19; an unhesitating submission to whose instructions was to be required of God's people? He has fulfilled his commission. His Divine sayings, preserved by the evangelists, together with the writings of his apostles, comprise a full revelation of the mind of the Lord, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. We have also the gracious assurance, that wisdom shall be given to those who ask for the blessing, James i. 5; and that the Holy Spirit, who ever abides in the church, will guide believers into all truth, John xiv. 16, 17; xvi. 7—14. But these privileges are nullified in the church of Rome. The consistent member of that church dares not trust himself to the simple word of God. The water of life is adulterated by human admixtures. Scripture is said to be made complete by tradition. Prayer for Divine teaching is useless to him who is previously bound to understand the heavenly record only according to an authorised interpretation. In a word, it is not Christ that teaches, for his words are not allowed to carry their own plain meaning. The church has assumed the place of her Master, the seat of the Judge; and it is mortal sin to refuse to receive her lessons. "Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition," Matt. xv. 6.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the "High Priest of our profession," Heb. iii. 1. He "hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour," Ephes. v. 2; and "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14. He "is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;" and there "he ever liveth to make intercession," Heb. ix. 24; vii. 25. By him, and by him only, we offer up "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God," 1 Pet. ii. 5. Through him we "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 14—16. These blessed truths cannot be realized and enjoyed by the child

of Rome. So far from believing that Christ was "once offered to bear the sins of many," Heb. ix. 28, and that, therefore, his sacrifice needs not to be repeated, as those which were offered under the law; he holds that the offering is renewed at every celebration of the mass; therein flatly contradicting the express declarations of the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, and doing foul dishonour to the adorable Redeemer. For according to this preposterous and most profane theory, it was not enough that the Father "bruised" his beloved Son, and "made his soul an offering for sin," Isa. liii. 10; it was not enough that the Saviour "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity," Titus ii. 14; it suffices not that the soul receives the truth, and being justified by faith "has" peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. v. 1; the process of sacrifice must be repeated again and again, and He who is "at the right hand of God," and "whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things," Rom. viii. 34; Acts iii. 21, must be brought down from his high glory, put into the hands of a sinful man, and thus presented anew to the Father for the completion of his own acts! And this must be going on in different parts of the world, at the same time, from day to day, from year to year, as long as the dispensation continues! Thus is the word of God annulled, and the heavenly Priest supplanted by his pretended earthly representatives. The precious truths of the gospel avail nothing to him whose mind is pre-occupied by these monstrous absurdities. Christ is put into the back ground; the priest is all in all: the priest, by whose wondrous power the bread and wine are transformed into the flesh and blood, the soul and Divinity of the Son of God, and who is not only said to offer the sacrifice "for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of living believers, and also for the dead in Christ, who are not yet thoroughly purified,"* but who, oh horrible profanity! celebrates the awful mystery in commemoration of supposed saints!† Christ immolated in

* Decree of the Council of Trent on the Mass, ch. ii.

† Lest the above statement should seem overstrained, the following extracts are given from the Roman Breviary:—"May the intercession, we beseech thee, O Lord, of Bishop Peter, thy apostle, render the prayers and offerings of thy church acceptable to thee; that the *mysteries we celebrate in his honour* may obtain for us the pardon of our sins." "Sanctify, O Lord, the offerings of thy people by the prayers of Paul, thy apostle; that what is acceptable to thee be-

honour of Thomas à Becket! Can satanic ingenuity exceed this?

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men," 1 Tim. ii. 5. Every prayer offered to a saint denies the truth of this inspired declaration. The Roman Catholic owns, indeed, one God, but he has as many mediators as there are saints in the Breviary, and their number is constantly increasing. This is plain matter of fact; no sophistry can explain it away. Among them the virgin Mary holds the chief place. "The devout Roman Catholic pays her the most extravagant honour and veneration. The language adopted in addressing the 'queen of heaven' cannot be acquitted of the charge of blasphemy, since prayers are offered directly to her, as if to a Divine being, and blessings are supplicated, as from one who is able to bestow them. In all devotions she has a share. The ave maria accompanies the pater noster. 'Evening, morning, and at noon,' said the psalmist, 'will I pray unto thee, and cry aloud:' the Roman Catholic transfers these services to the virgin. In tender childhood he is taught to cherish for her the profoundest reverence and the highest affection; throughout life she is the object of his daily regard, and five solemn festivals, annually observed to her honour, call forth his ardent love and zeal;* and in the hour of death, he is taught to place reliance on her mercy. To the ignorant devotee she is more than Christ, than God; he believes that she can command her Son, that to her intercession nothing can be denied, and that to her power all things are possible."† The present pope, Gregory XVI., has shown his signal attachment to the virgin, in his Encyclical Letter, addressed to the prelates of the Romish church in 1832,

cause by thee instituted, may become still more acceptable by hi intercession." These prayers are recited Jan. 18, on occasion o: "the feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome."

* Her Conception, Dec 8; Nativity, Sept. 8: Annunciation, March 25 Purification, Feb. 2; Assumption, August 15.

† "She is most powerful with God, to obtain from him all that she shall ask of him. She is all goodness in regard to us, by applying to God for us. Being mother of God, he cannot refuse her request; being our mother, she cannot deny her intercession when we have recourse to her. Our miseries move her, our necessities urge her; the prayers we offer her for our salvation bring us all that we desire; and St. Bernard is not afraid to say 'That never any person invoked that mother of mercies in his necessities, who has not been sensible of the effects of her assistance.'"—Catholic School Book, p. 158.

shortly after his assumption of the pontifical dignity. In the beginning of the letter, his holiness observes, "We select for the date of our letter this most joyful day," (Aug. 15,) "on which we celebrate the solemn festival of the most blessed virgin's triumphant assumption into heaven, that she, who has been through every great calamity our patroness and protectress, may watch over us, writing to you, and lead our mind by her heavenly influence to those counsels which may prove most salutary to Christ's flock." The closing paragraph contains the following sentences:— "But that all may have a successful and happy issue, let us raise our eyes to the most blessed virgin Mary, who alone destroys heresies, who is our greatest hope, yea, the entire ground of our hope. May she exert her patronage to draw down an efficacious blessing on our desires, our plans, and our proceedings, in the present straitened condition of the Lord's flock."* "Gregory XVI. is an idolater: he bows down and worships one who is 'no God,' and calls upon others to do the same, and yet he is infallible!"†

Is it not now proved, that Popery discards the true and proper priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ?

The Saviour is King in Zion. He is described in prophecy as a "Priest upon his throne," Zech. vi. 13. He is a "Priest after the order of Melchizedek," Psalm cx. 4; Heb. vii. His kingdom "is not of this world," John xviii. 36. He rules over those for whom he intercedes. He is "Head of the body, the church," Col. i. 18. All offices in the church, specified in the New Testament, are of his creation; all gifts are of his bestowment, for "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers," Eph. iv. 11; and the Bible is the statute book of his kingdom. We find there no mention of delegated power, or appointment of vicegerency. Our duty in things spiritual is not to make laws—they are already made by Divine enactment—but to obey them. The pope assumes to be Christ's vicegerent on earth; but where is his commission? Who is it that "changes times and laws," Dan. vii 25; that "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God?" 2 Thess. ii. 4. His

* Laity Directory, 1833.

† Text Book of Popery, p. 352—358.

attitude and his acts alike betray him. He commands where he should exhort; he punishes those whom he ought only to try to persuade; for the bread of heaven he gives the stones of earthly tradition and will-worship; instead of the meekness and gentleness of Christ, we have bulls and decrees, thundering out anathemas against all who dare to reject his usurpations; and his hand holds the torch to light the martyr's pile whenever secular governments permit the infamous deed. Is this the chief bishop of the church of Christ, the representative of the Lord? No! It is the "man of sin," the "son of perdition," "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming," 2 Thess. ii. 3, 8.

"Is the reader a member of that church whose doctrines and practices have been described in these pages? Suffer the entreaties of a friend. Break the fetters of your thraldom. Dare to think for yourself. Fear not priest, prelate, or pope; their anathemas cannot harm you. God gives you his blessed word; let no man take it out of your hands, or interfere with the inalienable right of conscience. Dread not to read and examine that sacred volume, but thankfully receive the gift of Heaven. Thence learn Christianity. Determine to receive nothing, as religion, which does not bear on its front the attestation of Divine authority; and for every such attestation require indubitable proof from the word of God. Compare your system with the New Testament: reject whatever you do not find in that holy book; and be not deceived by a church which tells you that she has power to interpret, invent, and ordain—gives you no better evidence than her own assertion—and forbids doubt or scrutiny. Above all, pray for Divine instruction and grace. Inquiry into religious truth is the most important of all inquiries. Opposing systems cannot both be right; neither ought it to be regarded as a matter of indifference whether we serve God according to his revealed will, or not. Be open to conviction; search with impartiality; seek wisdom from above. 'Every one of us shall give account of himself to God,' Rom. xiv. 12."*

* Text-Book of Popery, p. 398.

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CHRISTIANITY.

WHAT is Christianity? This is a question which, during the last eighteen centuries, has been often put, and as often answered: the temple, the synagogue, the school, the market-place, the pulpit, and the press—the cross too, the prison, the scourge, the rack, the gibbet, and the stake, have each in turn, and in a special form, uttered a clear and distinct reply. Still, however, in each succes sive generation the same inquiry is made; and ever would we have it prolonged; for the question is too fair to be refused, and the reply is too important to be withheld. There is not, and there has not been, a system which makes so large a demand on men, as moral and accountable beings, which so boldly casts down for scrutiny many and splendid credentials, which professes to meet so fully and actually the whole and real condition of man, or which holds out richer prospects of bliss in connexion with faith, or a deeper gloom of misery as the consequence of unbelief, than Christianity. By nothing has the attention of the world been more occupied in the way of profession or rejection, promul gation or persecution, during the last 1800 years, than by Christianity. Her records have been tested, her statements have been sifted, her principles argued, her doctrines im pugned, her demands questioned, and her evidences scrutinized; her disciples have been watched and tortured, and her ministers bribed or martyred. Paganism sought to strangle her at birth, Mohammedanism to substitute another in her room, superstition to bury her alive, infidel philosophy

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799;
DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER-ROW

openly to condemn and crucify her, and, worst of all, hypocritical worldliness has sought to plunge her into the abyss of a freezing and perpetual oblivion. But all in vain: Christianity, true, pure, immortal, and divine, still lives and reigns; still joyfully does she go forth in the light of the sun, and before all her enemies. She still teaches, proclaims, commands, threatens, and promises, as at the beginning: repelling pride, fearless of malice, and abhorring hypocrisy, she begs for sincere and honest inquiry; she hails as victory begun, and rejoices as in conscious triumph, in the candid and earnest question, "Who art thou?" or, "What is Christianity?" To this question we shall attempt to give a brief reply; looking at Christianity in four different points of view.

I. Christianity, *in its more general and visible form*, is the system of religion professed and observed by the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. This glorious Person appeared on this earth 1800 years ago. Born in an obscure family, of a virgin mother, after having given in early childhood public and convincing tokens of his extraordinary character, he came forth in his thirtieth year as the public Teacher of his nation. He declared himself to be the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; and, in support of his Divine mission, he wrought, in the most public manner, the most undeniable miracles. His character, during his short but laborious ministry, was uniformly pure, noble, self-denying, and benevolent, and truly consistent with that Divine character which, amidst the weakness of humanity, he constantly claimed. During the three years and a half of his ministry, he drew around him and trained up a little band of devoted disciples; over them he exercised the sweetest authority and the tenderest affection.

At length certain ungodly and wicked men, rulers and teachers among the Jews, who hated his words and his works, contrived and compassed his death; and he was, by the weak and cowardly Pilate, the Roman governor, condemned to be executed on the cross This cruel, shameful,

and unjust death, he piously and meekly endured, appealing only to God his Father, and that too only for pardon to his murderers. After death, he was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Jewish council; the stone of the sepulchre was sealed, and a Roman guard set to watch it.

On the morning of the third day, agreeably to his own prediction, which had led to those precautions, he arose from the dead; and after being seen and fully recognized by his disciples, during a period of nearly six weeks, whilst in the act of blessing them, he ascended upwards, and was hid from their sight. He had previously assured them that he was going into heaven—into the presence of God; and that, if they tarried at Jerusalem for a time, he would send down unto them his Holy Spirit by whom they should be endued with power from on high. They did wait, the Spirit did come, the powers were granted, they spake in languages which they had never learned, but which, (unlike the pretences of modern fanatics,) were perfectly understood: and they healed the sick, by the name of Jesus, not only in Judea, but all over the world. His disciples, now become apostles, went everywhere preaching the facts, of which they had been eye and ear witnesses. For this they suffered the loss of all things, even unto death. They uniformly maintained that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and that he died for the sins of men: and they called on all men to repent of their sins against God, and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ that they might be saved. Such doctrine was accounted foolishness by the intellectual infidels of Greece, and became a stumbling-block to the self-righteous bigots of Judea. Yet such was the irresistible power which attended its simple preaching, even in that first generation, when all those alleged facts were capable of thorough investigation, and when witnesses were still living, that Christian churches were planted over the known globe; and by the end of two centuries more the empire of the world had become, professedly, Christian

That religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, so begun and established in the world, has, amidst many abuses, heresies, hypocrisies, apostasies, and almost extinctions, survived to this day: there is still a true church of Christ, holding the religion of Christ purely; consisting of those who abide by the facts and doctrines contained in his holy word. Faith, practice, and worship, grounded on these, we call the religion of Christianity.

II. Christianity, *in its written and recorded form*, is a revelation from God. Our religion is based upon the Bible, the word which he hath given us for that end; and we know and are sure that it came from him, and may be trusted as true and infallible in itself. The following principles may serve to illustrate our faith in this matter.

We hold it as clear and undeniable, that God has *power* to communicate his mind or will to his creatures in any matter that may seem good to him. We have the power of mutual communication amongst ourselves as creatures; and surely the Creator, from whom we have received it, hath the same power, and in a higher degree.

We also hold as an evident principle, that God can reveal or communicate his mind to us *infallibly and truly*, so that we shall know that it is he indeed who speaks and none other. We can so enable our fellow-men, by certain evidence, to identify us in our communication; and surely he, who out of creative fulness has invested us with such ability, hath it in a perfect degree himself.

We further maintain, that He hath at his disposal *all the modes of communication* which his creatures can employ. For from him they have derived those modes, and the ability to use them. Speech, writing, representation, suggestion, dictation, are as certainly at his command as at ours: he may use one or all of them as he pleases, and in such use of them, he can as certainly show that he is the Author or Agent, as we could in any one or all of those modes.

We add to this the assertion, that Almighty God hath *an indisputable right* so to make known his will to us.

When it seems good to him, and by whom it seems good to him, or in whatever matter seems good to him, he has a right to declare to us, his mere creatures, his sovereign will.

Nor can it be denied that it is *most desirable* that God should, in his great goodness, exercise this his right in any accessible mode, by making known to us his mind in certain matters to us most interesting and important. All men, in all ages, who have spoken or written freely the workings of their souls, have admitted their need of larger and surer knowledge than man could attain on many subjects which God only could reveal. Yea, all serious and reasonable men are in the weightiest matters connected with their present happiness or future destiny, craving and groping after greater certainty than either their own reason or human wisdom alone can furnish. What conscientious man is there who does not desire intensely, at times, some revelation in regard to the justice and mercy of God? whether he will be reconciled to those who have done evil? how a sinner may be accepted before God? what is the future state that awaits him? what is the standard of obedience? what is the right mode of worship? what is true happiness, and where is it to be found?

Now Christianity is that revelation, so needful and so desirable for fallen man. Where the sun, moon, and stars, —where reason, conscience, and imagination have failed, the Scriptures shine forth. Our almighty, wise, and gracious God, having constant access to the inmost souls of his creatures, being able to exercise a sure control over minds which were his own production, was pleased to raise up, and inwardly inspire by his Holy Spirit, certain men of old to write the several parts of Scripture, according to the ends which he had in view. They, acting under a secret Divine power, (which no man can comprehend but he who felt it, and no man can disprove, although he may deny it,) composed those several books of the Old and New Testament which are now amongst us. The former of these Testaments contains a revelation of a preparatory kind, given

first to the Jews, to prepare for the coming of Christ into the world; it was to Christianity as the dawn is to sunrise, the same light, but differing in form and degree. In the New Testament we have Christianity itself, in all its fulness and completeness as a revelation; there we have unfolded the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. In the Gospels of Christ, the Acts of his apostles, the Epistles to the churches, and the prophetic Book of the Apocalypse, we have all that we hold to be Christianity. By this as Christians do we abide; we maintain nothing as essential to our religion which is not directly or virtually there: on this we build all our hopes, to this would we conform all our practice, and being able by the clearest evidence, historical in testimonies, external in its seals, internal in its character, and experimental in its power, to identify God as its Author, we glory in Christianity as a revelation from God. It is not our present object to state our evidence, but our faith: and of this we may say, that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. iii. 16; and that whilst we use it as such, we do so discover and behold God in his own truth, just as we daily see and know the sun in its own light, that we can no more doubt in the former case than in the latter.

III. Christianity, *as to its substance*, is that way of salvation which Almighty God has ordained and revealed to man for his acceptance; so that a true Christian is a saved person.

That evil exists in man and over the whole world is universally admitted.

That a perfectly good Being must hate evil; and that a righteous Governor ought, (with reverence be it spoken,) to mark it for punishment, and to repress it, is self-evident.

That if evil in our nature or in our practice be a violation of God's law, then God, against whom sin is committed, alone can forgive; and it is for him to say whether he will forgive, and on what terms; this is his clear right.

That if a man's moral constitution has become so deranged by evil introduced into it, that it is his very nature and habit to sin, then it is needful that his constitution be regenerated, and his habits radically broken up by a change of moral nature; and that none can effectually accomplish this regeneration in us but that God in whom we live and move and have our being, who framed our constitution, and who is the alone Source of good: this also in principle and experience we hold to be true and plain.

That such salvation from evil, both in its punishment and in its power, is unspeakably desirable, it is almost unnecessary to assert.

It is also a matter of experience and observation, that all means devised or pursued by men for accomplishing those ends, that is, for securing the pardon of sin and a change of moral nature, have failed; they have been insufficient in the outset, because they were not appointed or approved by God, in a matter in which we have chiefly to do with him, as in the pardon of sin; and they are found to be insufficient in the result, for they have not brought the power to regenerate man: they have not removed the penalties nor the source of evil.

But Christianity is a method of salvation exactly suited to this state of things, meeting man's whole case in theory, and found to be effectual in practice. For,

1. We act on Divine authority. We are not left to invention, conjecture, or experiment, but we have the testimony of God himself to rest upon: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," Isa. xlv. 22. He who alone can forgive, says he will forgive; he who alone can save, says that he will save; and he from whom we have departed, himself invites us to return. Therefore have we confidence at the outset.

2. Grace is the grand principle of this salvation, and therefore it is suited for the unworthy and the helpless. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,"

John iii. 16: "God commendeth his love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8: "By grace are ye saved," Eph. ii. 8. As it is impossible for a sinner to merit salvation, this scheme of grace demands no price; so that a sinner, as such, can embrace it and be saved; and the greatest sinners may be saved by grace as well as the least transgressor.

3. This grace is exercised through a Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is called "The Saviour," because on him is devolved the office of saving us. He being the Son of God, became also the Son of man, by uniting himself with true humanity. By a glorious contrivance of Divine wisdom he possesses, by personal union in himself, the Divine nature which has been sinned against, and the human nature which has sinned. How this is accomplished is to us, like all the other secrets of the Deity, incomprehensible: the very existence of Godhead is to us a mystery, much more this special "manifestation of God in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16. The Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator, taking the place of sinners, by perfect obedience in our nature honoured the broken law of God and magnified its authority; and by intense suffering, even unto death, he endured, in the sinner's stead, the awful penalty annexed to transgression. So that the glory of God's moral character is maintained by the righteousness of a substitute who is of infinite glory in his own person, and at the same time the penitent transgressor has a sure ground of acceptance in returning from his sins to his God, because atonement has been made for sin in the sacrifice of the Son of God in our human nature. God is thus "just, and yet the justifier of them who believe in Jesus," the Mediator, Rom. iii. 26. God was, and is, in Christ, (as Mediator,) reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto men their sins," 2 Cor. v. 19. The Lord Jesus Christ now lives and appears as Mediator in heaven: and being everywhere present by his Divine nature, he is ready to receive all who come unto him; wherefore, it is written, "He

is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Heb. vii. 25. How blessed a discovery is this!

4. Regeneration also is another principle in Christianity as a scheme of salvation. We hold that God who at first created man in his own image, who has constant power over his own creatures, even in their fallen state, and who is just as able to regenerate us now as he was to make us at first, is pleased to send forth his Holy Spirit to deliver the human soul from the bondage of innate evil, and to renew it unto that which is good. The Spirit of God imparts to us a new and divine life, whereby we become of one moral nature with God, so that we consent to his will and love his law, and seek our chief happiness in him. As it was formerly our nature to do evil, so now is it to do good. By this regeneration we become true children of God; and "whosoever is born of God sinneth not," 1 John v. 18. By this change we become true Christians; for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3.

Such is Christianity as a scheme of salvation. Reader, are you disposed to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" Do you seek salvation from the guilt and punishment of sin? Then, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 30, 31: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" John i. 29.

Or, seek you salvation from the power of evil within you? Then receive the promise of the Spirit to regenerate you: pray thus; "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me!" Psa. li. 10; and submit yourself to that good Spirit of God, who "worketh in us both to will and to do of God's good pleasure," Phil. ii. 13.

Thus pardoned and thus renewed, you will become an heir of eternal life, and be fitted for heavenly glory.

IV. Lastly, Christianity as to the *inward experience or*

power of it in the soul, is true happiness. The two grand binderances to real blessedness in this world are the guilt and the power of evil, as already shown; the one bringing down the displeasure of God, and the other by an inward consciousness displeasing ourselves. But when, by the salvation of Christ, we are restored to the favour of God, and are delivered from the dominion of sin, then is the foundation of true blessedness laid, and Christianity, as a living power within us, becomes pure happiness. It is peace. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1. It is joy. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice," Phil. iv. 4: "In Christ Jesus, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," 1 Pet. i. 8. It is hope. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God:" "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil," (that is, in heaven,) "whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever," Rom. v. 2; Heb. vi. 19, 20. It is love. "Faith worketh by love," Gal. v. 6: "The love of Christ constraineth us," 2 Cor. v. 14: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love," 1 John iv. 7, 8. It is light. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6. It is morality. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 11—14. It is generous ardour. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things

but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him," Phil. iii. 8, 9. It is noble fellowship. "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel," Heb. xii. 22—24. It is confidence. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day," 2 Tim. i. 12. It is triumph. "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. viii. 38, 39. It is glory. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," 1 John iii. 1, 2. "Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Rev. i. 5. 6.

And, finally, Christianity, in its very nature and exercise, is a life of gracious and tender invitation to others, to partake of the same blessings with ourselves. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John i. 3: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God," 2 Cor. v. 20: "The Spirit and

the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely," Rev. xxii. 17.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with all" them who read these words, to persuade them of the truth, to draw them to him, to save them perfectly, and to fill them with the fulness of Christianity, which is the blessed life of God in the soul, for evermore. Amen, Lord Jesus so be it. And let the reader, in candour and humility, bend the knee, and, lifting up the heart to heaven, say, "Amen, Lord Jesus, even so be it."

Let everlasting glories crown
Thy head, my Saviour and my Lord;
Thy hands have brought salvation down,
And writ the blessings in thy word.

What if we trace the globe around,
And search from Britain to Japan,
There shall be no religion found
So just to God, so safe for man.

In vain the trembling conscience seeks
Some solid ground to rest upon;
With long despair the spirit breaks,
Till we apply to Christ alone.

How well thy blessed truths agree!
How wise and holy thy commands!
Thy promises how firm they be!
How firm our hope and comfort stands!

Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the gospel to my heart.

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"ALL'S WELL."

IN the summer of 18—, the writer was on a visit to some friends at a sea-port and garrison town, on the eastern coast, where, during the silence of the night, he often heard the words, "All's well," re-echoed by the several sentinels on duty, as the clock of a neighbouring church chimed the hour. There was something cheering in the sound of these words, importing, as they did, that all around was in safety. But they brought to the mind subjects of greater moment, and afforded matter for spiritual meditation: All is well—All well for time. All well for eternity.

Who can say that this is his own happy experience? The Christian, the real disciple of Christ: and he only. What does that inward sentinel, the conscience, say? The heart, purged by the application of the blood of Jesus from the stains of guilt, is at peace with God! The Christian may be lying on a bed of sickness, his bones chastened with pain, and the hour of dissolution at hand; but is death a conquered enemy? In the hours of health, he has sought and found the Saviour; to him, therefore, it is "gain to die," and thus he is enabled to say, All is well. He may be weeping over the remains of one whom he loved most dearly, who has died "in the

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Lord;" but he knows that "them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him," 1 Thess. iv. 14; and that a little, a very little while will reunite them among the spirits of just men made perfect. To the dead and to the living, therefore, all is well. Or, perhaps, he has experienced the loss of all his worldly goods; he looks around in vain for the comforts he once enjoyed: yet with him all is well. He has not made gold his hope, neither fine gold his confidence, Job xxxi. 24; but his treasure and his heart are laid up, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal," Matt. vi. 20. The unsearchable riches of Christ are his portion, and he knows that he has in heaven a better and more enduring substance; and having counted "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus," his Lord, Phil. iii. 8, with him it may indeed be said, all is well.

While thus musing on the glorious privileges the sincere Christian enjoys, sounds were heard of a far different nature: the oaths, the song, and the laugh of the profligate and the drunkard. Is it all well with these midnight revellers? Alas, no! their mirth is but as "the crackling of thorns under a pot," which blazes for a few minutes, and then all is darkness: rather may we say of these unhappy persons, all is ill. Their vices lead to disease and want; an accusing conscience embitters this life, and an eternity of woe awaits them in another. Our blessed Saviour's prayer for

his murderers, when expiring on the cross, rose to my lips, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," Luke xxiii. 34. Satan is leading them blindfold. Reckless of the present and the future, they resemble the insane idiot, who dances on the verge of a precipice, unconscious that the next step he takes may plunge him into the yawning gulph below! "O that they were wise,—that they would consider their latter end!" and before it be too late, seek for pardon through the only propitiation for sinners, "Jesus Christ the righteous," 1 John ii. 1, 2.

Should any who are still walking in the ways of sin read these pages, let them pause and consider how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, unpardoned, unrenewed, and unsaved! "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," Prov. xiv. 12. Whether it be the soldier speaking on duty his hourly watch-word, "All is well," or the sailor pacing the deck of the vessel as she rides on the "mountain wave," or the landsman on his native shore, let them seriously ask themselves this question, "Is it all well with my soul?" and let conscience give a faithful answer.

While open sinners are thus warned, let the inquiry be pressed home upon those whose outward conduct may be exemplary. Is all well? Is your heart right in the sight of God? Have you sincerely repented of sin? Have you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ?

Are you living lives of faith in the Son of God? Are your motives constrained by the love of Christ? Do you seek to imitate Christ? Do you endeavour to do all things to the glory of God? There are many who have a name to live while they are dead; but of none but those who are united to Christ by a living faith can it be said, All is well.

To those who by the grace of God have already experienced the "new birth unto righteousness," the exhortation must be addressed, Take heed that your walk and conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ. Be consistent. Watch and pray: both are necessary towards maintaining the character of a Christian. Fight the good fight of faith, like true soldiers of Jesus Christ, that when the great Captain of our salvation comes, you may hear that blessed sentence pronounced upon you, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant:—enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 21.

Soldier, on thy station stand,
Faithful to thy Saviour's call,
With the shield of faith in hand,
Fearless, let what may befall.

Nothing fill thee with dismay,
Hunger, toil, or length of way;
In the strength of Jesus boast,
Never, never quit thy post.

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IS IT WELL WITH YOU?

READER,

IS IT WELL WITH YOU? This is an important inquiry, whether it relate to your health or your circumstances. But is it not infinitely more important, when the inquiry is concerning the state of your soul—of your soul, which will live for ever in a state of happiness, or of misery? Ask yourself, "Is it well with my soul?"

To assist this important inquiry, your attention is requested to the substance of a letter, written by the late Rev. W. GRIMSHAW to some friends in London.

"IT IS WELL with four sorts of people, with whom you either may have had, or now have to do.

"It is well with those in Christ who are gone to God.

"It is well with those of you in Christ who are not yet gone to God.

"It is well with those of you who earnestly desire to be in Christ, that they may go to God.

"And (be not surprised when I add, what I will prove to you before I conclude) it is well for those of you who neither desire to be in Christ, nor to go to God.

"And it is only NOT WELL, but ill, with such, as being found by death out of Christ, are gone to their everlasting punishment. These last it is best that we let alone, and say no more about.

"First. IT IS WELL with those who, being in Christ, are gone to God. These servants and members of Christ have no more doubt or pain about them. They are now and for ever out of the reach of the world, the flesh, and the devil. They can neither sin, nor sorrow any more. They are gone 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the

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weary are at rest.' They are sweetly reposing in Abraham's bosom. They dwell in the presence of that Saviour who hath redeemed them, where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. They are awaiting the joyful morning of the resurrection, when their vile bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body, shall be reunited to their souls, shall receive the joyful sentence from his lips, and shall 'inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.'

"Second. IT IS WELL also with those of you who are in Christ, though not yet gone to God. You live next to those who are gone to Him. Heaven is begun with you also; 'the kingdom of God is within you;' you feel it. This is a kingdom of 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' It is begun in grace, and shall terminate in glory. Yea, it is Christ within you, the hope of glory: Christ, the rock, the foundation, aid in your hearts; hope in the middle, and glory crowning the whole: Christ, Hope, Glory, Christ, Hope, Glory. You are washed in the blood of the Lamb, justified, sanctified, and shall shortly be glorified. Yea, your lives are already 'hid with Christ in God.' You have your conversation already in heaven; and already you 'sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' What animating, what heavenly sentences are these! What can come nearer paradise? Bless the Lord, O ye happy souls, and let all that is within you bless his holy name. Sing unto the Lord as long as you live, and praise your God while you have your being. And how long will that be?—Through the endless ages of a glorious eternity.

"O my dear brethren and sisters in Christ! this is my hope, and this is my purpose. But to whom, and to what, are we indebted for all this, and infinitely more than all the tongues and hearts of men or angels can tell, or conceive? To our Redeemer only, and to his merits. Christ within us is JESUS to us; 'for he shall save his people from their sins' Matt. i. 21. We are poor, lost, helpless sinners 'aliens

from the commonwealth of Israel,' and children of wrath. But Jesus lived, and Jesus died, 'the just for the unjust,' to bring us to the enjoyment of all this blessedness.

"And what does all this love require at our hands? Why, infinitely more than we can render him to all eternity. However, let us praise and glorify God in the best manner, and with the best member that we have. Let us do it constantly, cordially, cheerfully, so long as we live, and then no doubt we shall do it in heaven for ever.

"Keep close, I beseech you, to every means of grace. Strive to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, 'giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity. For if these things,' says St. Peter, 'be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Thus you will give the best token of your thankfulness to Him, for what he hath done for your souls; and you shall, not long hence, in heaven, sing his praise, with your happy brethren, gone thither before you.

"Third. IT IS WELL with all those of you who do truly desire to be in Christ, that you may go to God. For assuredly he owns you. Your desires are from him, and you shall enjoy his favour. By and by you shall have peace with him through our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Go forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed beside the shepherds' tents.' Improve in every means of grace. He will be found of them that diligently seek him. 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted?' Though your sins be ever so many, ever so monstrous, all shall be forgiven to them that repent and believe. He will have mercy upon you, and will abundantly pardon. For where sin hath abounded, grace doth much more abound. He who

hath begun this good work in you, will accomplish it to your eternal good, and his own eternal glory. Therefore doubt not, fear not; a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise. The deeper is your sorrow, the nearer is your joy. Your extremity is God's opportunity. It is usually darkest before daybreak. You shall shortly find pardon, peace, and plenteous redemption, and at last rejoice in the common and glorious salvation of his saints.

"Fourth and last. However strange it may sound to you, IT IS WELL for you, who neither truly desire to be in Christ, nor seek to go to God. For it is well for you that you are not in hell. It is well your day of grace is not utterly past. 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.' Oh! that you may employ the remainder of it in working out your salvation with fear and trembling. Now is faith to be had, saving faith. Now you may be washed from all your sins in the Redeemer's blood, justified, sanctified, and prepared for heaven. Take, I beseech you, and improve the time while it is given you. You have now the means of grace to use; the ordinances of God to enjoy; his word to read and hear; his ministers to instruct you, and his members to converse with. You know not what a day may bring forth. You may die suddenly. As DEATH LEAVES YOU, JUDGMENT WILL FIND YOU. And if you should die as you are, out of Christ, void of true faith, unregenerate, unsanctified, snares, fire, and brimstone, storm, and tempest, will God rain upon you, Psalm xi. 7, as your eternal, intolerable portion.

"Suffer me, therefore, thus far, one and all of you, God's glory and your everlasting welfare is all I aim at. What I look for in return from you is, I confess, much more than I deserve, your prayers. Pray for me, and I will pray for you."

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A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

TWO INTIMATE FRIENDS

ON REGENERATION;

OR,

THE NEW BIRTH.

Charles. MY dear friend, I am glad to see you; I hope you are well.

Henry. I thank God, perfectly well.

Cha. I feared you were ill, or dead; for I have missed you at all the places of amusement where we used to meet. What have you done with yourself?

Hen. I have totally declined my former amusements, being convinced of their vanity and danger. I wish now to employ my time in a more profitable manner.

Cha. Are you become religious then?

Hen. I see the necessity of religion in a stronger light than before; and I am determined, by the grace of God, to make the "one thing needful" the first business of my life.

Cha. What do you mean by "the one thing needful?"

Hen. The phrase is scriptural, and means "the keeping of the soul," in opposition to the inordinate

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cares of this life. I am now ashamed to reflect upon my former vanity and negligence.

Cha. You think too meanly of yourself. You were always a very good Christian. I know you went to church sometimes, and, if I mistake not, to the sacrament. Your charity I have often witnessed; and I think you have as good a heart as any man in the world.

Hen. I had indeed "the form of godliness," but I knew nothing of its power. I am now satisfied that true religion is quite another thing than what I once took it to be.

Cha. What then is your new notion of religion?

Hen. Religion begins in regeneration, or the new birth.

Cha. (shaking his head) My dear friend, I am sorry for you. You have certainly been among the enthusiasts, and I fear your head is affected.

Hen. Yes, and my heart too, I hope; for a change of heart is the very thing I mean by the new birth.

Cha. Prithee, Henry, let us hear no more of this unmeaning cant. Let me advise you directly to forsake these whining hypocrites; resume your former cool and rational religion, and return to the innocent gaieties of life.

Hen. Give me leave to ask you a question: Do you believe the Bible?

Cha. Why do you ask that question? Did I ever renounce it? I am quite of opinion, that the Bible is the best book of morality in the world. I shall therefore adhere to the Bible.

Hen. I am glad to hear you say so. I too had once my doubts, excited by some of my gay companions; but now I am completely satisfied that the Bible is the word of God.

Cha. What was it that removed your scruples?

Hen. It was the proof I have had of its truth in my own experience, that put the matter beyond a doubt. The description which the Bible gives of the human heart, of the criminal attachment of all men by nature to sensual pleasures, of their rooted enmity

to vital religion, together with what I have found of this in myself, and the consciousness of the necessity of a total alteration, agreeably to the same Scriptures, assure my mind, to a demonstration, that the Author of the Bible can be no other than the great God, "who searcheth the hearts, and trieth the reins of the children of men." My belief of the Bible is daily strengthened by what I see and feel; and the opposition of wicked men to it confirms my faith. In short, I am more than ever convinced of the necessity of the new birth.

Cha. I should be glad to know on what particular authority you rest with regard to that strange doctrine.

Hen. Upon the highest authority in the world—an authority which my friend will scarcely question; I mean that of our adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ. You recollect, probably, his discourse with Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

Cha. I think I do. Was he not an old gentleman, who came at night to seek instruction?

Hen. The same; and just in the same manner as you and I once crept into a place of worship, where the doctrine of Christ was preached. I was then ashamed of it, because I knew not its value; but now I rejoice to avow it. Our Saviour assured Nicodemus, in the most positive and solemn manner, that unless a man was born again, he could not enter the kingdom of God. See John, chap. iii.

Cha. I remember once to have heard a sermon on that text, which I did not well understand; and hearing that the preacher was a reputed enthusiast, it gave me little concern. Soon after that, I was in company with one who affirmed that regeneration was nothing but baptism; upon which I took the pains to examine the register at church, where finding my own name, I was perfectly satisfied, and took it for granted, I was regenerated at the time and place there mentioned.

Hen. According to that gentleman's plan, it must necessarily follow that, all baptized persons being regenerate, and all regenerate persons being entitled to

heaven, few in this nation will be in danger of perdition. But as it is evident that multitudes of people in this nation are notorious sinners, and avowed infidels, it then follows, that, contrary to express declarations of Scripture, such characters must nevetherless be saved.

Cha. This undoubtedly appears absurd, and I cannot defend it.

Hen. Indeed it is a most serious and dangerous mistake, to suppose that anything short of a change of heart can be regeneration; and, I trust, would you hear me patiently, I could convince you of it.

Cha. I greatly dislike religious disputes; but your assertions are so serious, that they demand a candid attention; only permit me to observe, that I am engaged with a party to see a new play performed this evening; and (*taking out his watch*) I have not half an hour to spare.

Hen. I will not detain you a quarter of an hour; but could I prevail with you to see the importance of the subject, and the absolute necessity of this change, I dare venture to assert that you would visit the theatre no more.

Cha. You must not expect to make me a convert; but you know I am not a bigot. Go along with me, and give over your preaching.

Hen. Pardon me, I must proceed; if you think me tedious, I will desist.

Cha. Go on; but be brief.

Hen. Regeneration is a great change: the term implies as much. It signifies an entrance into a new life. The same change is elsewhere called—"passing from darkness to light," and "from death to life." It is also called "a new creation." Do not these expressions denote something more than a few faint desires, a little outward decency, or some lifeless forms of devotion?

Cha. Perhaps they may, when applied to the case of a heathen or of a Jew, when he becomes a Christian; but, you know, we are all Christians.

Hen. In name and profession we are so; but I observe further, that this is an inward change; and is, therefore, as necessary for a nominal Christian as for a Turk. You know the Scripture speaks of some as Jews outwardly, but not inwardly, Rom. ii. 28, and the same may be said of Christians. In religion, God looks chiefly at the heart. The great promise of the covenant is—"A new heart will I give you." No outward change in the way of reformation or profession is enough, I know, by my former experience, that a person may avoid many vices, and practise many duties, without a grain of true religion.

Cha. How can that be?

Hen. I will tell you. A regard to health or reputation may do much, and the slavish fear of hell may do more. A man may perform many religious duties, burdensome as they are to him, in hope of avoiding the pains of hell, which he fears may be less tolerable. But give me leave to add, it is a universal change. Most people have serious thoughts and form good resolutions at times, and perhaps effect a partial change in their conduct which quiets their fears. The change observable in some is the mere effect of age, temper, or situation; and sometimes religious and moral duties are performed only to make an atonement for vices still indulged.

Cha. Possibly, this may be true. But your plan is so extremely strict, that flesh and blood can never come up to it.

Hen. With man it is impossible, but not with God; for the change I plead for, is supernatural; I mean that no man can produce it by his own power. Regenerated persons are, therefore, said to be "born of God;" "born from above;" "born of the Spirit," John i. 13; John iii. 3, etc.

Cha. And pray, what is the design of this mighty change?

Hen. It is designed to repair the loss which mar sustained by his fall in Adam, to restore the image of God in his soul. All things were made for the glory

of God; but the natural man has no regard to this. The language of his heart and practice is—"My lips are my own; who is Lord over me?" But the renewed man admits his Maker's right to rule; and his heart says, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" The natural man seeks merely his own happiness, and this determines his choice of employments and amusements. His religious actions are not chosen, but submitted to. The regenerate soul, on the contrary, is brought to rest in God as his chief good, and to prefer his presence to every other enjoyment; he is deeply convinced of the vanity of the world, and he turns from it to God. The sum of the Divine law is to love God supremely, and our neighbour disinterestedly; now, in regeneration, this principle is implanted, gains the ascendancy, and tends towards that perfection which it receives in the heavenly world.

Cha. Well, I like your account of regeneration better than I expected; and supposing it to be just, pray inform me how it is brought about.

Hen. Perhaps I shall detain you too long; you were going to the play-house. Will you permit me to ask, Whether the gaieties of that place have, in your opinion, any tendency to promote the dispositions I have just recommended? Will they not directly tend to erase every impression of this important subject?

Cha. To be ingenuous, I think they may; and as I am inclined calmly to consider the matter before us, I will forego my intended amusement, and beg you to proceed.

Hen. I thank you. I trust you will not regret the loss of your favourite diversion. Should the Almighty vouchsafe to bless my attempts for your good, you will have eternal occasion to rejoice. I will therefore observe—In the new birth there is a conviction of a person's sin and danger. There is a dissatisfaction with our past character and conduct; and this dissatisfaction there must be, if we have a right knowledge of God, and of our duty towards him. When the un-

derstanding is in darkness, there is "an alienation from the life of God." but when we have a discovery of his real nature and infinite glory, we see how reasonable it is that he should be the supreme object of our desires. This view of God sets the evil of sin in the strongest light. If God be loved, we shall abhor ourselves. For it is not enough that a sinner dreads the punishment of his iniquity, he must also see "the sinfulness of sin." Many have trembled for fear of punishment, who had no just sense of the evil of sin itself, no cordial approbation of the holiness of God's nature and law, or of the justice of a sinner's condemnation. Many feel themselves miserable creatures, but not guilty sinners; they are terrified, but not humbled.

Cha. Do you think such views as these necessary to all men—to the virtuous and moral, as well as to the vicious and profane?

Hen. Yes, to all, without exception, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God," Rom. iii. 19.

Cha. But I should dread to entertain such gloomy thoughts. May they not tend to despair and madness?

Hen. By no means. They are rather preparatory to the reception of the gospel, which means good news, glad tidings of great joy to all people; for I was going to observe to you, in the next place, as an essential part of this great change, that there must be an acceptance of salvation through the cross of Christ. Before conviction of sin, the gospel of Christ generally appears to be foolishness; or, at least it is insipid. There is no just idea of its meaning, no inward relish of its sweetness; but those who have been wounded in spirit, begin to perceive its unspeakable value. With what eagerness, before unknown, does the sinner now inquire after the way of life! And what would he not give for good ground to believe that his sin is pardoned, and his peace made with God! He hears, with gladness, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth

on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." "Is there then," says he, "hope of mercy from that God, whom I have so long forgotten, and so greatly offended? Hath he indeed loved a guilty world, and loved it in so amazing a manner, as to send his Son to save it from destruction? How great the Giver! How wonderful the gift! How undeserving the objects that receive it!"

Cha. These religious feelings may be very proper, though, I confess, I have been a stranger to them; but I am an advocate for morality; and I should be glad to know what connexion your spiritual notions have with a good life, which, after all, is the main thing, in my opinion.

Hen. The heart being renewed, the life will, of necessity, be reformed; and holiness, which includes morality, but far exceeds it, will be its genuine effect. But on this subject, I may venture to appeal to you. You have just said, that my system might be true, but it is so extremely strict, that, flesh and blood cannot endure it. You can have, therefore, no fears as to its morality. I may also refer you (though I would do it with much humility) to myself. You see the effects it has had on me, in weaning me from licentious amusements and gay company. The truth is, he that is born of God manifests the change by the newness of his life. This new doctrine, as you call it, teaches us, "that, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world."

Cha. But how do your opinions thus powerfully influence your conduct?

Hen. He who is born of God, discovers his new nature by new apprehensions of God, and of himself —of the world, and of eternity—of Jesus Christ, and of the ordinances of his appointment. Will you hear a few words on each of these?

Char. With pleasure—except that, while you describe the new creature, I am conscious that, if your description be right, I am wrong.

Hen. A discovery of our being wrong, is the only way to be set right. Let not that discourage you. The regenerate person has new views of God. He really and inwardly believes the being, presence, power, and providence of God. Formerly, God was seldom in his thoughts; now, he can scarcely look upon any thing without considering its relation to him. What a glory does he now behold in all the Divine perfections, particularly in that goodness and love which God has manifested in giving his own Son to die for our transgressions!

Cha. This is marvellous! I never considered the Almighty as an object of delight, but rather of awe and dread. But pray proceed.

Hen. The convinced sinner has also new apprehensions of himself. Before, he thought himself his own master; now, he sees that he belongs to God; he confesses his obligations, and mourns for his transgressions. He wonders that the power of God did not arrest him in his wicked course, and by some signal stroke, make him a dreadful monument of his righteous indignation.

Cha. This is all new to me. I am sure my friends in general do not think thus of themselves, nor did you till lately. This is to differ exceedingly from the world.

Hen. I admit it; for the regenerate person has quite new views of the world, and of worldly men. The charm is now dispelled, and the false colours are taken off from the world and its enjoyments. He has also new apprehensions of eternity. Formerly, the vanities of time engrossed his thoughts, while eternity was seldom in view; but now, it is frequently and strongly upon his mind. Once, he treated unseen things as fabulous; now they weigh down all earthly things, making them appear light as a feather in the balance. Again, the regenerate person has new views of Jesus Christ. Before, he seemed "without form or comeliness;" but now, he appears "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely."

Cha. That is the reason, I suppose, that those places are generally best filled, where most is said upon this subject.

Hen. Yes, it is the delight of a converted man, who, as I was going to observe, has also new views of Divine ordinances. Once, they were his burden; now, his joy. The sabbath wore a sable garb, and an offensive gloom; now, he calls it "the holy of the Lord, and honourable."

In short, a change in the whole character and conduct takes place. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart, and becomes the grand principle of his actions. All other duties flow from it. He is habitually influenced by gratitude to God. It is not mere thankfulness to a bountiful Benefactor for undeserved favours; but a sense of obligation to a Saviour, "who loved him, and washed him from sin in his own blood."

This plainly includes in it, and will certainly produce sincere and fervent love to his fellow-creatures. If they are bad men, the same love to God, which fills him with grief and indignation at his own sins, will inspire him with ardent desires for their recovery and salvation; and, as to good men, they are united by the tenderest ties, and love one another with a pure heart fervently.

Cha. If this is true, your religion must be much better than I expected.

Hen. This, my friend, is a brief view of the important subject; a subject in which every man is deeply interested. Let me once more repeat the solemn truth, and may God Almighty, by his good Spirit, impress it upon your heart, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Without this great, inward, universal, supernatural change, no man can be saved. God is no respecter of persons: let a man be high or low, rich or poor, learned or illiterate, of one Christian denomination or of another, if he is not the subject of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, he is a child of wrath, and

dying in that condition, must "go away into everlasting punishment!"

Cha. My dear sir, I have no doubt of your sincerity in thus labouring to convince me. The doctrine you have advanced is so new to me, that I cannot at once make up my mind about it. It appears to me, however, I confess, to deserve attention.

Hen. I thank you for your candour, and shall be glad at any time to converse farther with you. Only permit me to entreat you to consider the matter with reference to yourself, and seriously examine whether you know any thing of this great change. Remember, Charles, we are dropping into the grave from day to day, and then, our state is fixed beyond the possibility of a change. It is the most unreasonable thing in the world to live in uncertainty whether we shall go to heaven or hell; whether we shall be companions of angels, or associates with blaspheming devils, to all eternity. Nothing, therefore, can be more salutary than to make an impartial search into your present character and state. If you have reason to conclude you are at peace with God, what an unspeakable source of joy and consolation! If otherwise, there is no time to be lost in hastening from the brink of ruin.

Cha. What advice would you give to one who has reason to suspect his state to be dangerous? Can you suggest any ground of hope?

Hen. Blessed be God, the gospel is full of encouragement to returning prodigals, and to penitent sinners. I would recommend private and importunate prayer. "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Jesus Christ is "able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him." Flee to him, and be saved. There is no sin of so deep a dye, but the blood of Christ is sufficient to wash it out. There

is no slave of Satan so loaded with chains but He is able to set him free. Read your Bible with prayer; frequent those places where Christ is preached: and I trust, the time will come, when you also shall say, "Old things have passed away, all things are become new. Glory be to God, the Author of the new creation!"

Mighty Redeemer, set me free,
From my old state of sin;
O, make my soul alive to thee,
Create new powers within.

Renew mine eyes, and form mine ears,
And mould my heart afresh;
Give me new passions, joys, and fears,
And turn the stone to flesh.

Far from the regions of the dead,
From sin, and earth, and hell,
In the new world that grace has made
I would for ever dwell.

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THE

INTERPRETER'S HOUSE

(*From* BUNYAN'S *Pilgrim's Progress.*)

CHRISTIAN, like all other men, was born in the city of Destruction, or in a state of Nature, and lived for a considerable time in it; but, being convinced of his sin and danger, contrary to the advice of carnal friends, he departed in quest of Mount Zion, or eternal life in heaven. Like all other pilgrims, or Christians, he met with a variety of trials, but out of them all his Lord and Master delivered him. He met with crafty counsellors, who sometimes deceived him; but he soon found that his safety lay in attending strictly to the direction of Evangelist, or the word of God.

The following pages relate the instructions he received at the house of the Interpreter, which deserve the serious consideration of every reader.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, 56, PATERNOSTER-ROW;
INSTITUTED 1799.

Then Christian went on till he came to the house of the Interpreter,* where he knocked over and over: at last one came to the door, and asked, Who was there?

Chr. Sir, here is a traveller, who was bid by an acquaintance of the good man of this house to call here for his profit; I would therefore speak with the master of the house. So he called for the master of the house; who, after a little time, came to Christian, and asked him, What he would have? Sir, said Christian, I am come from the city of Destruction, and am going to Mount Zion; and I was told by the man that stands at the gate, at the head of this way, that if I called here, you would show me excellent things, such as would be helpful to me on my journey.

Then said the Interpreter, Come in; I will show thee that which will be profitable to thee. So he commanded his man to light the candle, and bade Christian follow him: so he took him into a private room, and bade his man open a door; which when he had done, Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hung up against the wall, with his eyes lifted up to heaven, and the best of books in his hand; the law of truth was written upon his lips, and the world was behind his back: he stood as if he pleaded with men, and a crown of gold hung over his head.

Then said Christian, What meaneth this?

Interp. The man, whose picture this is, is one of a thousand. Whereas thou seest him with his eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, and the law of truth written on his lips: it is to show thee, that his work is to know and unfold dark things to sinners; even as also thou seest him stand as if he

* The Interpreter, to whom Christian applied for instruction, is the *Holy Spirit*, without whose teaching none can truly understand the things of God. He does not reveal new truths to the believer's mind but explains and applies what is already revealed in the Bible.

pleaded with men. And whereas thou seest the world as cast behind him, and that a crown hangs over his head: that is to show thee, that, slighting and despising the things that are present, for the love that he hath to his Master's service, he is sure, in the world to come, to have glory for his reward. Now, said the Interpreter, I have showed you this picture first, because the man, whose picture this is, is the only man whom the Lord of the place, whither thou art going, hath authorized to be thy guide in all difficult places thou mayest meet with in the way:* wherefore take good heed to what I have showed thee, and bear well in thy mind what thou hast seen, lest in thy journey thou meet with some that pretend to lead thee right; but their way goes down to death.

Then he took him by the hand, and led him into a very large parlour that was full of dust, because never swept; which after he had viewed a little while, the Interpreter called for a man to sweep. Now when he began to sweep, the dust flew about so abundantly that Christian had almost been choked therewith. Then said the Interpreter to a damsel that stood by, Bring hither water, and sprinkle the room: which when she had done, it was swept and cleansed with ease.

Chr. What means this?

Interp. This parlour is the heart of a man that was never sanctified by the grace of the gospel: the dust is his original sin, and inward corruptions, that have defiled the whole man. He that began to sweep first is the Law; but she that brought water, and did sprinkle it, is the Gospel. Now, whereas thou sawest that as soon as the first began to sweep, the

* This describes a *true minister of Christ,* who has his eyes lifted up to God for sufficiency and success—derives his knowledge and message from the Bible—what he thus receives, he faithfully delivers; his heart is in the work—he pleads earnestly with men, from a sense of Christ's love, the worth of souls, and the importance of eternity.

dust did so fly about, that the room by him could not be cleansed, but thou wast almost choked therewith: this is to show thee, that the law, instead of cleansing the heart from sin, doth revive, put strength into, and increase it in the soul, even as it doth discover and forbid it; but it doth not give power to subdue it. (Rom. vii. 6. 1 Cor. xv. 56. Rom. v. 20.)

Again, as thou sawest the damsel sprinkle the room with the water, upon which it was cleansed with pleasure: this is to show thee, that when the gospel comes in the sweet and precious influences thereof to the heart; then, I say, even as thou sawest the damsel lay the dust, by sprinkling the floor with water; so is sin vanquished and subdued, and the soul made clean, through the faith of it, and consequently fit for the King of glory to inhabit.* (John xv. 3. Eph. v. 26. Acts xv. 9.)

I saw, moreover, in my dream, that the Interpreter took him by the hand, and had him into a little room, where sat two children, each one in his chair. The name of the eldest was Passion, and the name of the other Patience. Passion seemed to be much discontented, but Patience was very quiet. Then Christian asked, What is the reason of the discontent of Passion? The Interpreter answered, The governor of them would have him stay for his best things till the beginning of next year; but he will have all now: but Patience is willing to wait.

Then I saw that one came to Passion, and brought him a bag of treasure, and poured it down at his feet; which he took up, and rejoiced therein, and withal laughed Patience to scorn: but I beheld for a

* The dusty parlour very properly represents *the heart of man.* Every attempt to produce conformity of heart and life to the law of God, by regarding its spiritual precepts, apart from the doctrines and promises of Scripture, discovers evils which before were unobserved. It is only the cordial belief of gospel truth, respecting Jesus the Saviour, which can produce peace in the conscience, or holiness in the heart.

little while, and he had lavished all away, and had nothing left him but rags.

Then said Christian to the Interpreter, Expound this matter more fully to me.

Interp. These two lads are figures; Passion, of the men of this world; and Patience, of the men of that which is to come: for, as here thou seest, Passion will have all now this year, that is to say, in this world; so are the men of this world; they must have all their good things now; they cannot stay till next year, that is, until the next world, for their portion of good. That proverb, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," is of more authority with them than all the divine testimonies of the good of the world to come. But as thou sawest that he had quickly lavished all away, and had presently left him nothing but rags; so will it be with all such at the end of the world.*

Chr. Now I see that Patience has the best wisdom, and that upon many accounts:—1. Because he stays for the best things. 2. Because he will have the glory of his when the other has nothing but rags.

Interp. Nay, you may add another; to wit, The glory of the next world will never wear out; but these are suddenly gone. Therefore Passion had not so much reason to laugh at Patience, because he had his good things first, as Patience will have to laugh at Passion, because he had his best things: for first must give place to last, because last must have its time to come; but last gives place to nothing, for there is not another to succeed. He, therefore, that has his portion first, must needs have time to spend it: but he that has his portion last, must have it lastingly; therefore it is said of the rich man

* *Carnal men*, like *Passion*, seek nothing more than the gratification of their senses; their end will be the loss of all things, and the destruction of their souls. But the *just*, like *Patience*, live by faith on Jesus, and in hope of joys to come; their end will be glorious; for they shall receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls, and the everlasting enjoyment of Christ in glory.

(Luke xvi.) "In thy lifetime thou receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

Chr. Then I perceive it is best not to covet things that are now, but to wait for things to come.

Interp. You say the truth: "For the things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal." But though this be so, yet, since things present, and the fleshly appetite, are such near neighbours one to another; and again, because things to come, and carnal sense, are such strangers one to another; therefore it is, that the first of these so suddenly fall into amity, and that distance is so continually between the second."* (Rom. vii. 18.)

Then I saw in my dream that the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and led him into a place, where was a fire burning against a wall, and one standing by it, casting much water upon it to quench it; yet did it burn higher and hotter.

Then said Christian, What means this?

The Interpreter answered, This fire is the work of grace that is wrought in the heart: he that casts water upon it, to extinguish and put it out, is the Devil; but in that thou seest the fire, notwithstanding, burns higher and hotter; thou shalt also see the reason of that. So he took him to the back side of the wall; when he saw a man with a vessel of oil in his hand, which he did continually, but secretly, cast into the fire.†

Chr. What means this?

Interp. This is Christ, who continually, with the oil of his grace, maintains the work already begun in the heart, by means of which, notwithstanding what the Devil can do, the souls of his people prove

* Here we see the preciousness of *faith.* The believer sets a due value on things to come;—he pierces through the objects of time and sense, and fixes upon glory and eternity. This is a life of heaven upon earth.

† The fire secretly supplied, is a beautiful illustration of the manner in which *spiritual life is maintained in the soul of a believer.*

gracious still.* And in that thou sawest, that the man stood behind the wall to maintain the fire: this is to teach thee, that it is hard for the tempted to see how this work of grace is maintained in the soul. (2 Cor. xii. 9.)

I saw, also, that the Interpreter took him again by the hand, and led him into a pleasant place, where was a stately palace, beautiful to behold; at the sight of which, Christian was greatly delighted: he saw also upon the top thereof certain persons walking, who were clothed all in gold.

Then the Interpreter took him, and led him up toward the door of the palace; and behold, at the door stood a great company of men, as desirous to go in, but durst not. There also sat a man at a little distance from the door, at a table, with a book, and his inkhorn before him, to take the names of them that should enter therein: he saw also, that in the doorway stood many men in armour to keep it, being resolved to do to the men that would enter what hurt and mischief they could. Now was Christian somewhat in amaze: at last, when every man started back for fear of the armed men, Christian saw a man of a very stout countenance, come up to the man that sat there to write, saying, Set down my name, Sir; which when he had done, he saw the man with his sword drawn, and a helmet upon his head, rush towards the door upon the armed men, who laid upon him with deadly force; but the man, not at all discouraged, fell to cutting and hacking most fiercely. So, after he had received and given many wounds to those that attempted to keep him out, he cut his way through them all, and pressed forward into the palace; at which there was a pleasant voice heard from those that were within,

* The wisdom, love, and faithfulness of God towards his people, and their fidelity to him, are much more signally displayed by their being supported, and brought through various temptations, than they could be, if their path was always smooth. It is a cause of wonder, not to others only, but to themselves.

even of those that walked upon the top of the palace, saying,

Come in, come in,
Eternal glory thou shalt win.

So he went in, and was clothed with such garments as they. Then Christian smiled, and said, I think verily I know the meaning of this.*

Now, said Christian, let me go hence. Nay, stay, said the Interpreter, till I have showed you a little more, and after that thou shalt go on thy way. So he took him by the hand again, and led him into a very dark room, where sat a man in an iron cage.

Now, the man seemed very sad: he sat with his eyes looking down to the ground, his hands folded together, and he sighed as if he would break his heart. What means this, said Christian? At which the Interpreter bade him talk with the man.

Then said Christian to the man, What art thou? The man answered, I am not what I was once.†

Chr. What wast thou once?

Man. I was once a fair and flourishing professor, both in mine own eyes, and also in the eyes of others: I once was, as I thought, fair for the celestial city, and had even joy at the thoughts that I should get thither. (Luke viii. 13.)

Chr. Well, but what art thou now?

Man. I am now a man of despair, and am shut up in it, as in this iron cage. I cannot get out. Oh! no, I cannot.

Chr. But how camest thou in this condition?

Man. I left off to watch and to be sober; I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts; I sinned against

* In spite of all opposition, the believer resolutely forces his way, and presses towards the mark, for the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He is not content with a few lazy wishes, or languid hopes.

† Let us beware of *backsliding*. Man knows the beginning of sin, but God only knows the end of it. Yet many have been released from the iron cage. *Watch* and *pray*, lest ye come into this cage of despair, or even a worse state, having a hardened insensible heart.

the light of the word, and the goodness of God; I have grieved the Spirit, and he is gone; I have tempted the Devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and he has left me; I have so hardened my heart that I cannot repent.

Then said Christian to the Interpreter, But is there no hope for such a man as this? Ask him, said the Interpreter.

Then said Christian, Is there no hope, but you must be kept in the iron cage of Despair?

Man. No, none at all.

Chr. Why, the Son of the Blessed is very pitiful.

Man. I have crucified him to myself afresh; I have despised his person; I have despised his righteousness; I have counted his blood an unholy thing; I have done despite to the Spirit of grace: therefore I have shut myself out of all the promises; and there now remains to me nothing but threatenings, dreadful threatenings, of certain judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour me as an adversary. (Heb. vi. 4—6. x. 26—29.)

Chr. For what did you bring yourself into this condition?

Man. For the lusts, pleasures, and profits of this world; in the enjoyment of which I did then promise myself much delight: but now these things bite me, and gnaw me like a burning worm.

Chr. But canst thou not now repent and turn?

Man. God hath denied me repentance. His word gives me no encouragement to believe: yea, he himself hath shut me up in this iron cage; nor can all the men in the world let me out. O eternity! eternity! how shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in eternity!

Then said the Interpreter to Christian. Let this man's misery be remembered by thee, and be an everlasting caution to thee.

Well, said Christian, this is fearful! God help me to watch and be sober, and to pray that I may

shun the cause of this man's misery. Sir, is it not time for me to go on my way?

Interp. Tarry till I shall show thee one thing more, and then thou shalt go on thy way.

So he took Christian by the hand again, and led him into a chamber, where one was rising out of bed: and as he put on his raiment, he shook and trembled. Then said Christian, Why doth this man thus tremble? The Interpreter then bade him tell to Christian the reason of his so doing. So he began and said, This night as I was in my sleep, I dreamed, and behold the heavens grew exceedingly black! also it thundered and lightened in such a fearful manner, that it put me into an agony. So I looked up in my dream, and saw the clouds racked at an unusual rate; upon which I heard a great sound of a trumpet, and saw also a man sit upon a cloud, attended with the thousands of heaven: they were all in flaming fire; also the heavens were in a burning flame. I heard then a great voice, saying, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!" And with that the rocks rent, the graves opened, and the dead that were therein came forth: some of them were exceedingly glad, and looked upward; and some sought to hide themselves under the mountains. Then I saw the man that sat upon the cloud open the book, and bid the world draw near:* yet there was, by reason of a fierce flame which issued out and came before him, a convenient distance between him and them, as betwixt the judge and the prisoners at the bar. I heard it also proclaimed to them that attended on the man that sat upon the cloud, "Gather together the tares, the chaff, and stubble, and cast them into the burning lake:" and with that the bottomless pit opened, just whereabout I stood; out of the mouth of which there came, in

* A frequent meditation on the solemnity, terror, and certainty of the last day's account, is one of the best means of preparing us for it. It is said of Jerome, that for many years of his life, whatever he was doing, he thought this voice was sounding in his ears, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment."

abundance, smoke and coals of fire, with hideous noises. It was also said to the same persons, "Gather my wheat into the garner." And with that I saw many caught up, and carried into the clouds; but I was left behind. I also sought to hide myself, but I could not; for the man that sat upon the cloud still kept his eye upon me. My sins also came into my mind; and my conscience did accuse me on every side.* Upon this I awaked from my sleep. (1 Cor. xv. 1 Thess. iv. Jude, ver. 14, 15. John v. 28, 29. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. Rev. xx. 11—14. Isa. xxvi. 19—21. Dan. vii. 9, 10. Mal. iv. 1. Luke iii. 17 Rom. ii. 16.)

Chr. But what was it that made you so afraid of this sight?

Man. Why, I thought that the day of judgment was come, and that I was not ready for it: but this frightened me most, that the angels gathered up several, and left me behind; also the pit of hell opened her mouth just where I stood. My conscience too afflicted me; and, as I thought, the Judge had always his eye upon me, showing indignation in his countenance.

Then said the Interpreter, Christian, hast thou considered all these things?

Chr. Yes; and they put me in hope and fear.†

Interp. Well, keep all things so in thy mind, that they may be as a goad in thy sides, to urge thee forward in the way thou must go. Christian then began to gird up his loins, and to address himself to his journey. Then said the Interpreter, The

* This last sight with which Christian was favoured was intended as a warning against *carnal security.*

† *Hope* and *fear* have each their proper place in a Christian's experience. The promises of God in Christ afford a strong and unshaken foundation for a lively hope; and they who know the deceitfulness of their hearts, the strength and subtlety of their enemies, the snares they are exposed to from their situation in this world, will see just cause for a continual jealousy and fear. Without such a fear, formality and carelessness will take place. Therefore it is said, "Blessed is the man that feareth always."

Comforter be always with thee, good Christian, to guide thee in the way that leads to the city. So Christian went on his way, saying,

Here have I seen things rare and profitable,
Things pleasant, dreadful, things to make me stable
In what I have begun to take in hand:
Then let me think on them, and understand
Wherefore they showed me were: and let me be
Thankful, O good Interpreter! to thee.

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No. 111

THE WORK

OF

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BY THE LATE REV. ROBERT HALL, A. M.

THE regeneration, and growth in holiness, of every christian, are to be primarily attributed to the operation of the Holy Spirit. Without this, nothing can be done or attained, to any important purpose in religion. Your candid attention is requested to a few hints respecting the most likely method of securing and perpetuating that blessed influence. The numerous cautions, warnings, and advices, with which the mention of this subject is joined in the sacred writings, suffice to show that the doctrine of which it treats is a practical doctrine; not designed to supersede the use of means, or the exercise of our rational powers, but rather to stimulate us to exertion, and teach us how to exert them aright. "If ye live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit." Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption."

The Spirit, we must remember, is a most free Agent, and though he will not utterly forsake the work of his hands, he may be expected to withdraw himself in a great measure, on being slighted, neglected, or opposed; and as our holiness and comfort depend entirely upon him, it is important for us to know what deportment is calculated to invite, and what to repel his presence.

1. If we would wish for much of the presence of God by his Spirit, we must learn to set a high value upon it. The first communication of spiritual influence, is, indeed, imparted without this requisite: for it

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can only be possessed in any adequate degree by those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. "I am found of them that sought me not." But in subsequent donations, the Lord seems very much to regulate his conduct by a rule—that of bestowing his richest favours where he knows they are most coveted, and will be most prized. The principle whence Divine communications flow, is free, unmerited benignity; but in the mode of dispensing its fruits, it is worthy of the supreme Ruler to consult his majesty, by withholding a copious supply, till he has excited in the heart a profound estimation of his gifts.

No words are adequate to express the excellence and dignity of the gift of the Divine Spirit. While Solomon was dedicating the temple, his great soul appears to have been put into a rapture at the very idea that He whom the heaven of heavens could not contain, should deign to dwell with man upon the earth. How much more should each of us be transported when he finds the idea realized, by his own heart having become the seat of the Divine presence. There are two considerations drawn from scripture, which assist us in forming a conception of the magnitude of this blessing.

The first is, that it is the great promise of the christian dispensation, and stands in nearly the same relation to us, that the coming of the Messiah did to the pious Jews. They waited for the consolation of Israel in the birth of Christ; and now that that event is past, we are waiting, in a similar manner, for the promise of the Spirit, of which the church has hitherto enjoyed but the first fruits. To this, the Saviour, after his resurrection, pointed the expectation of his apostles, as emphatically the promise of the Father, which they were to receive at the distance of a few days; and when it was accomplished at the day of Pentecost, we find Peter insisting on it as the most illustrious proof of his ascension, as well as the chief fruit that converts were to reap from their repentance and baptism. "Repent, and be baptized," said he,

"every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise (that is, the promise of the Spirit) is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The apostle Paul places it in a similar light, when he tells us, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles:" and in what that blessing consists, he informs us, by adding, "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith." On this account, probably, he is styled the Spirit of promise, that is, the Spirit so often promised; in the communication of whom, the promises of God so centre, that it may be considered as the sum and substance of all the promises.

Another consideration, which evinces the supreme importance of this gift, is, that, in the esteem of our Lord, it was more than a compensation to his disciples for the loss of his bodily presence: so much superior to it, that he tells them, it was expedient he should leave them in order to make way for it: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Great as the advantages were, which they derived from his society, yet they remained in a state of minority: their views were contracted, their hearts full of earthly adhesions, and a degree of carnality and prejudice attended them, which it was the office of the Spirit to remove. From his more ample and effectual teaching, a great increase of knowledge was to accrue, to qualify them for their work of bearing witness to Christ, and a powerful energy to go forth, which was to render their ministry, though in themselves so much inferior, far more successful than the personal ministry of our Lord. In consequence of his agency, the apostles were to become enlightened and intrepid, and the world convinced. "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. But when the Spirit of truth

is come, he will lead you into all truth. He will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." Accordingly, after his descent, we find the apostles strangely transformed; an unction, a fervour, a boldness, marked their character, to which they had hitherto been strangers; and such conviction attended their preaching, that in a short time a great part of the world sunk under the weapons of their holy warfare. Nor is there any pretence for alleging, that this communication was confined to miraculous gifts; since it is asserted, to be that Spirit which should abide in them for ever, and by which the church should be distinguished from the world. He is styled, "The Spirit of truth, whom the world could not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him:" but, it is added, "Ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

As we are indebted to the Spirit for the first formation of the Divine life, so it is he who alone can maintain it, and render it strong and vigorous. It is his office to actuate the habits of grace where they are already planted; to hold our souls in life, and to "strengthen us, that we may walk up and down in the name of the Lord." It is his office to present the mysteries of salvation; the truths which relate to the mediation of Christ and the riches of his grace, in so penetrating and transforming a manner, as to render them vital, operating principles, the food and the solace of our spirits. Without his agency, however intrinsically excellent, they will be to us mere dead speculation, an inert mass: it is only when they are animated by his breath, that they become spirit and life.

It is his office to afford that anointing by which we may know all things; not only by a light which is merely directive to the understanding, but which so shines upon the heart, as to give a relish of the sweetness of Divine truth, and effectually produce a compliance with its dictates. It belongs to him "to seal us to the day of redemption," to put that mark and

character upon us, which distinguishes the children of God, as well as to afford a foretaste, and an earnest of the future inheritance. "And hereby," saith an apostle, "we know that we are of God, by the Spirit which he hath given us." It is his office to subdue the corruption of our nature, not by leaving us inactive spectators of the combat, but by engaging us to a determined resistance to every sinful propensity; by teaching our hands to war, and our fingers to fight, so that the victory shall be ours, and the praise his. To help the infirmities of saints, who know not what to pray for as they ought, by making intercession for them "with groanings, which cannot be uttered," is an important branch of his office. He kindles their desires, gives them a glimpse of the fulness of God, that all-comprehending good; and by exciting a relish for the beauties of holiness, and the ineffable pleasure which springs from nearness to God, disposes them to the fervent and effectual prayer which availeth much. In short, as Christ is the way, so it is equally certain, that the Spirit is the fountain of all the light and strength which enable us to walk in that way. Lest it should be suspected that in ascribing so much to the agency of the Spirit, we diminish the obligations we owe to the Redeemer, it may not be improper to remark, that the tendency of what we have advanced, rightly understood, will be just the contrary; since the scriptures constantly remind us, that the gift of the Holy Ghost is the fruit of his mediation, and the purchase of his death. It was his interposing, as "Emmanuel, God with us," to repair the breach betwixt man and God, that prevailed upon the Father to communicate the Spirit to such as believe on him, and to intrust the whole agency of it to his hands. As the reward of his sufferings, he ascended on high, and received gifts for men; of which, the right of bestowing the Spirit is the principal, that the Lord God might dwell among them. The bestowment, in every instance, through the successive periods of the church, looks back to the death of the Redeemer, as the root

and principle whence it takes its rise; and consequently is calculated to enlarge our conceptions of his office and character, as the copiousness of the streams evinces the exuberance of the fountain. To him the Spirit was first given above measure; in him it resides as in an inexhaustible spring, to be imparted in the dispensation of his gospel to every member of his mystical body, in pursuance of the purpose of his grace, and the ends of his death. It is his Spirit; called "the supply of the Spirit of Christ Jesus," not only by reason of the essential union which subsists between the Persons of the Godhead, but because the right of bestowing it was ascertained to him in the covenant of redemption.

2. If we would wish to enjoy much of the light and influence of the Spirit, we must seek it by fervent prayer. There are peculiar encouragements held out in the word of God to this purpose. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." To illustrate the readiness of our heavenly Father to bestow this blessing, our Lord borrows a comparison from the instinct of parental affection, which prompts a parent to give with alacrity good things to his children. He will not merely supply their wants, which benevolence might prompt him to do with respect to a stranger; but he will do it with feelings peculiar to the parental relation, and will experience as much pleasure in conferring, as the child in receiving his favours. It is thus with our heavenly Father: he delights in exercising kindness to his children, and especially in promoting their spiritual welfare. He gives not merely with the liberality of a prince, but with the heart of a Father. It is worth remarking, that in relating the preceding discourse, while one evangelist makes express mention of the Spirit, another speaks only of "good things," intimating that the communications of the Spirit comprehend whatever is good. Other things may, or may not be ultimately beneficial: they are either of a doubtful nature in themselves, or are rendered so by

the propensity our corruption gives us to abuse them. But the influence of the Spirit, by its efficacy in subduing that corruption, must be invariably beneficial; it is such an immediate emanation from God, the fountain of blessedness, that it can never fail of being intrinsically, essentially, and eternally good. It is also deserving our attention, that the injunction of seeking it by prayer, is prefaced by a parable constructed on purpose to teach us the propriety of urging our suit with importunity In imploring other gifts, (which we are at liberty to do with submission,) it is still a great point of duty to moderate our desires, and to be prepared for a disappointment; because, as we have already remarked, it is possible that the things we are seeking, may conduce neither to the glory of God, nor to our ultimate benefit; "for who knoweth what is good for man in this life all the days of his vain life?" But when we present our requests for a larger measure of his grace, we labour under no such uncertainty; we may safely let forth all the ardour and vehemence of our spirits, since our desires are fixed upon what is the very knot and juncture, where the honour of God and the interests of his creatures are indissolubly united. Desires after grace, are, in fact, desires after God: and how is it possible they can be too vehement or intense, when directed to such an object? His gracious presence is not, like the limited goods of this life, fitted to a particular crisis, or adapted to a special exigency, in a fluctuating scene of things; it is alike suited to all times and seasons, the food of souls, the proper good of man, under every aspect of Providence, and even the exchange of worlds. "My soul," said David, "panteth after God, yea, thirsteth for the living God. My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me." The most eminent effusions of the Spirit we read of in scripture, were not only afforded to prayer, but appear to have taken place at the very time that that exercise was performed. The descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, was while the disciples were with one accord in one

place; and after the imprisonment of Peter and John, who, being dismissed, went to their own company, "While they prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken with a mighty wind, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." When a new heart and a new spirit are promised in Ezekiel, it is added, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."

3. Habitual dependence on Divine influence is an important duty. This may be considered as opposed to two things; first, to depending on ourselves, to the neglect of Divine agency; next, to despondency and distrust.

When the Holy Spirit has condescended to take the conduct of souls, it is unquestionably great presumption to enter upon duty in the same manner as if no such assistance were needed, or to be expected; and the result will be as with Samson, who said, "I will go forth and shake myself, as in time past; and he wist not that the Lord was departed from him." It is one thing to acknowledge a dependence on heavenly influence in speculation, and another thing so to realize and feel it, as to say from the heart, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God." A mere assent to the proposition, that the Spirit must concur in the production of every good work, (an assent not easily withheld without rejecting the scriptures,) falls very short of the practical homage due from feeble worms to so great an Agent; and a most solemn and explicit acknowledgment of entire dependence may reasonably be expected. When you engage in prayer, or in any other duty, endeavour to enter upon it with a serious and deliberate recollection of your need of the Spirit. Let the consciousness of your weakness and insufficiency for every good work, be a sentiment rendered familiar to your minds, and deeply impressed on your minds.

But while we recommend this, there is another extreme against which we think it our duty to guard you, and that is, a disposition to despondency and distrust.

We are most ready to acknowledge that the assistance you need is free and gratuitous, neither given to our deservings, nor flowing from any connexion subsisting betwixt our endeavours and the exertion of Divine agency. The Spirit of God is a free Spirit; and it is impossible to conceive how either faith or prayer should have an intrinsic efficacy in drawing down influence from heaven. There is, however, a connexion, established by Divine vouchsafement, which entitles believers to expect, in the use of means, such measures of gracious assistance as are requisite to sustain and support them in their religious course The Spirit is spoken of as the matter of promise, to which every christian is encouraged to look: "The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." Agreeably to this, it is represented as the express purpose of Christ's becoming a curse for us, that the "promise of the Spirit might come on the Gentiles through faith." The same expectation is justified by the Saviour's own declaration, when on the last and great day of the feast he stood and cried, "Whosoever is athirst let him come unto me, and drink; for he that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: this," says the evangelist, "he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive."

The readiness of the Holy Spirit to communicate himself to true believers, is also evinced by the tenour of evangelical precepts: "Be ye strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." To command a person to be strong, seems strange and unusual language, but is sufficiently explained when we reflect, that a portion of spiritual power is ready to be communicated to those who duly seek it: "Be ye filled with the Spirit," which is the exhortation of the same apostle, takes it for granted that a copious supply is at hand sufficient to satiate the desires of the saints. We are at a loss to account for such precepts, without supposing an established connexion betwixt the condition

of believers and the farther communication of Divine influence. To the same purport, Paul speaks with apostolic authority. "This I say, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh;" and Jude inculcates the duty of praying in the Spirit, which would be strange, if no assistance were to be obtained; and as prayer is a duty of daily occurrence, the injunction implies that it is ready to be imparted to christians, not by fits and starts, or at distant intervals, but in a stated regular course.

For this reason, when we hear christians complaining of the habitual withdrawment of the Divine presence we are under the necessity of ascribing it to their own fault: not that we mean to deny there is much of sovereignty in this affair, or that "the Spirit, like the wind, bloweth where it listeth." But it should be remembered, we are now adverting to the situation of real believers, who are entitled to the promise: and though it is probable that there is much of sovereignty exercised even with respect to them, we apprehend it rather concerns those influences which are consolatory than such as are sanctifying: though there is a degree of satisfaction intermingled with every exercise of genuine piety, yet it is manifest that some influences of the Spirit tend more immediately to comfort, others to purification. Some are engaged in the fixed contemplation of objects which exist out of ourselves, the perfections of God, the excellency of Christ, the admirable constitution of the gospel, accompanied with a delightful conviction of a personal interest in whatever comes under our view; the natural fruit of which is "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." By others we are more immediately impressed with a lasting sense of our extreme unworthiness, and made to mourn over remaining corruption, and the criminal defects inherent in our best services

In the midst of such exercises, it is possible hope may languish, and comfort be reduced to a low ebb; yet the Divine life may still be advancing, and the soul growing in humility, deadness to the world, and the

mortification to its own will; as the sap during winter retires to the root of the plant, ready to ascend, and produce verdure and beauty on the return of spring. This is the will of God, even our sanctification; and though he delights in comforting his people at proper seasons, he is much less intent on this, than on promoting their spiritual improvement, to which, in this their probationary state, every thing is made subservient. Let us not then confound the decay of consolation with the decay of piety, nor imagine we can want the aids necessary to prevent the latter, unless we have forfeited them by presumption, negligence, and sloth. Whenever christians sensibly decline in religion, they ought to charge themselves with the guilt of having grieved the Spirit; they should take the alarm, repent, and do their first works, they are suffering under the rebukes of that paternal justice which God exercises in his own family. Such a measure of gracious assistance in the use of means, being by the tenor of the new covenant ascertained to real christians, as is requisite for their comfortable walk with God, to find it withheld should engage them in deep searchings of heart, and make them "fear lest a promise being left them of entering into his rest, they should appear to come short of it." But this leads us to observe, in the last place, that,

4. If we wish to enjoy the light of the Spirit, we must take care to maintain a deportment suited to the character of that Divine agent. When the apostle exhorts us not to grieve the Spirit of God, by which we are sealed to the day of redemption, it is forcibly implied, that he is susceptible of offence, and that to offend him involves heinous ingratitude and folly: ingratitude, for what a requital is this for being sealed to the day of redemption! and folly, inasmuch as we may fitly say on this, as Paul did on a different occasion, "Who is he that maketh us glad, but the same that is made sorry by us?" Have we any other comforter when he is withdrawn? Can a single ray of light visit us in his absence, or can we be safe for

a moment without his guidance and support? If the immense and infinite Spirit, by a mysterious condescension, deigns to undertake the conduct of a worm, ought it not to yield the most implicit submission? The appropriate duty owing to a faithful and experienced guide, is a ready compliance with his dictates: and how much more may this be expected, when the disparity betwixt the parties in question is no less than infinite. The language of the Holy Spirit, in describing the manners of the ancient Israelites, is awfully monitory to professors in every age: "They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he turned to be their enemy, and fought against them." As we wish to avoid whatever is more curious than useful, we shall not stay to inquire precisely on what occasions, or to what extent, the Spirit is capable of being resisted: it may be sufficient to observe, it is evident, from melancholy experience, that it is very possible to neglect what is the obvious tendency of his motions, which is invariably to produce universal holiness. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:" whatever is contrary to these, involves an opposition to the Spirit, and is directly calculated to quench his sacred influence.

From his descending on Christ in the form of a dove, as well as from many express declarations of scripture, we may with certainty conclude the indulgence of all the irascible and malignant passions to be peculiarly repugnant to his nature; and it is remarkable, that the injunction of not grieving the Holy Spirit is immediately followed by a particular caution against cherishing such dispositions: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Have you not found, by experience, that the indulgence of the former has destroyed that self-recollection and composure, which are

so essential to devotion? Vindictive passions surround the soul with a sort of turbulent atmosphere, than which nothing can be conceived more opposite to the calm and holy light in which the blessed Spirit loves to dwell. The indulgence of sensual lusts, or of whatever enslaves the soul to the appetites of the body, in violation of the rules of sobriety and chastity, it seems almost unnecessary to add, must have a direct tendency to quench his sacred influences; wherever such desires prevail, they war against the soul, immerse it in carnality, and utterly indispose it to every thing spiritual and heavenly. "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit;" it bears a resemblance to its author in being a spiritual production, which requires to be nourished by Divine meditation, by pure and holy thoughts.

If you wish to live in the fellowship of the Spirit, you must guard with no less care against the encroachments of worldly-mindedness; recollecting that we are christians just as far as our treasure and our hearts are placed in heaven, and no farther. A heart overcharged with the cares of this world, is as much disqualified for converse with God, and for walking in the Spirit, as it would be by surfeiting and drunkenness; to which, by their tendency to intoxicate and stupify, they bear a great resemblance.

How many, by an immoderate attachment to wealth, and by being determined at all events to become rich, "have fallen into divers foolish and hurtful lusts, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows;" and where the result has not been so signally disastrous, a visible languor in religion has ensued; the friendship of serious christians being shunned, and the public ordinances of religion attended with little fruit or advantage. As it is the design of the Spirit in his sacred visitations to form us for an habitual converse with spiritual and eternal objects, nothing can tend more directly to contract it, than to bury our souls in earth: it is as impossible for the eye of the mind, as for that of the

body, to look opposite ways at once; nor can we aim at "the things which are seen and temporal," but by losing sight of those "which are unseen and eternal."

But though a general attention to the duties of piety and virtue, and a careful avoidance of the sins opposed to these, are certainly included in a becoming deportment to the Holy Spirit, perhaps it is not all that is included. The children of God are characterised in scripture by their being "led by the Spirit:" led, evidently not impelled, not driven forward in a headlong course, without choice or design; but, being by the constitution of their nature, rational and intelligent, and, by the influence of grace, rendered spiritual, they are disposed to obey at a touch, and to comply with the gentler insinuations of Divine grace; they are ready to take that precise impression which corresponds with the mind and purpose of the Spirit. You are aware of what consequence it is in worldly concerns to embrace opportunities, and to improve critical seasons, and thus, in the things of the Spirit, there are times peculiarly favourable, moments of happy visitation, where much more may be done towards the advancement of our spiritual interests than usual. These are gales of the Spirit, unexpected influences of light and of power, which no assiduity in the means of grace can command, but which it is a great point of wisdom to improve. If the husbandman is attentive to the vicissitudes of weather, and the face of the sky, that he may be prepared to take the full benefit of every gleam of sun-shine and every falling shower, how much more alert and attentive should we be, in watching for those influences from above, which are necessary to ripen and mature a far more precious crop? As the natural consequence of being long under the guidance of another, is, a quick perception of his meaning, so that we can meet his wishes, before they are verbally expressed; something of this ready discernment, accompanied with instant compliance, may reasonably be expected from

those who profess to be habitually led by the Spirit. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," Psa. xxv. 14.

The design of his operation is, in one view, invariably the same—the production of holiness: but the branches of which that consists, and the exercises of mind which are rendered subservient to it, are various; and he who is intent on walking in the Spirit, will be careful to fall in with that train of thought, and cherish that cast of reflection, to which he is especially invited. For want of more docility in this respect, it is probable, we have often sustained loss. Permit us here to suggest two or three heads of inquiry. You have sometimes felt a peculiar seriousness of mind, the delusive glare of worldly objects has faded away, or become dim before your eyes, and death and eternity appearing at the door, have filled the whole field of vision. Have you improved such seasons for fixing those maxims, and establishing those practical conclusions, which may produce an habitual sobriety of mind, when things appear under a different aspect? You have sometimes found, instead of a reluctance to pray, a powerful persuasion to that exercise, so that you felt as if you could do nothing else. Have you always complied with these motions, and suffered nothing but the claims of absolute necessity to divert you from pouring out your hearts at the throne of grace? The Spirit is said to make intercession for saints, with groanings which cannot be uttered; when you have felt those ineffable longings after God, have you indulged them to the utmost? Have you stretched every sail, launched forth into the deep of the Divine perfections and promises, and possessed yourselves as much as possible of the fulness of God? There are moments when the conscience of a good man is more tender, has a nicer and more discriminating touch than usual, the evil of sin in general, and of his own in particular, appears in a more pure and piercing light. Have you availed yourselves of such seasons as these for searching into

"the chambers of imagery;" and while you detected greater and greater abominations, been at pains to bring them out, and slay them before the Lord? Have such visitations effected something towards the mortification of sin? Or have they been suffered to expire in mere ineffectual resolutions? The fruits which godly sorrow produced in the Corinthians, are thus beautifully portrayed: "What carefulness it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what revenge!" There are moments in the experience of a good man, when he feels a more than ordinary softness of mind; the frost of selfishness dissolves, and his heart flows forth in love to God and his fellow-creatures. How careful should we be to cherish such a frame, and to embrace the opportunity of subduing resentments, and of healing those sore wounds which it is scarcely possible to avoid in passing through this unquiet world!

There is a holy skill in turning the several parts of christian experience to account, analogous to what the votaries of the world display in the improvement of every conjuncture from which it is possible to derive emolument; and though the end they propose is mean and contemptible, the steadiness with which they pursue it, and their dexterity in the choice of means, deserve imitation. In these respects "they are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

Do not allow yourselves to indulge in religious sloth, or to give way to the solicitations of the tempter, from a confidence in the safety of your state, or in your spiritual immunities as christians. The habitual prevalence of such a disposition will afford a much stronger proof of insincerity than any arguments which can be adduced to the contrary; and, admitting your pretensions to piety to be ever so valid, a little reflection may convince you that a careless and negligent course will lay you open

to the severest rebukes. "You only have I known," says the Lord by the prophet, "of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities."

Remember, dear brethren, we profess a peculiar relation to God as his children, his witnesses, his people, his temple: the character of that glorious Being and of his religion will be contemplated by the world, chiefly through the medium of our spirit and conduct, which ought to display, as in a mirror, the virtues of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. It is strictly appropriate to the subject of our present meditations, to remind you that you are "temples." "For ye," says the apostle, "are the temples of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." What purity, sanctity, and dignity, may be expected in persons who bear such a character! A christian should look upon himself as something sacred and devoted; so that what involves but an ordinary degree of criminality in others, in him partakes of the nature of sacrilege; what is a breach of trust in others, is in him the profanation of a temple. Let us, dear brethren, watch and pray that nothing may be allowed a place in our hearts, that is not suitable to the residence of the holy and blessed God. Finally, "Having such great and precious promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness, in the fear of the Lord."

Having thus endeavoured to lay before you the most likely methods of obtaining the communications of the Spirit, as well as to show the great importance of this gift, we might now dismiss the subject, were we not desirous of first guarding you against a dangerous mistake. The mistake to which we refer, is that of taking conviction for conversion. certain

impressions of the guilt and danger of sin made upon the conscience, for the saving operations of the Spirit. These convictions are important; it is highly desirable and necessary to have a settled persuasion of the established connexion betwixt sin and punishment; and, as a natural consequence, to feel uneasiness and alarm, in proportion as we have reason to believe our sins are yet unpardoned. Until we see ourselves lost, we shall never truly come to Christ for salvation. Until we feel our malady, and dread its consequences, we shall never have recourse to the physician, or be willing to comply with his prescriptions. We adjure you, therefore, as you value your eternal interests, not to trifle with convictions; or to endeavour to wear off religious concern and uneasiness, by the vanities of life, and the stupefactions of pleasure. Regard and cherish them as the sacred visitations of Heaven; look upon them as mercifully designed to rouse and awaken you from a fatal stupor. They are often the harbingers of mercy. Wherever the Spirit of God is in reality, he will convince of sin; but conviction is produced in thousands who still remain destitute of saving grace. That influence of the Spirit by which a change of heart is effected, is essentially different from that distress and alarm which may be resolved into the exercise of mere natural conscience. For a man to be convinced that he is a sinner, and to tremble at the apprehension of wrath to come, is certainly something very distinct from becoming a new creature. Real christians have not only perceived their danger, but have fled for refuge; have not only been less or more troubled with a sense of guilt, but in consequence of coming to Christ, have found rest for their souls. On a review of your past life, you perceive innumerable transgressions, it may be, and are perfectly convinced that you have been "walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." So far it is well: your apprehensions are

just, and well founded; and your situation more replete with danger than you have ever conceived it to be. Do not, however, rest here. Let the views you entertain excite you the more earnestly to press into the kingdom of God. Let them engage you to a more diligent use of the means of grace, and, above all, let them lead you to fix your hope and trust on the Redeemer, whose blood alone can cleanse you from sin, and whose intercession is "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him," Heb. vii. 25. Apply to him with humble faith and ardent prayer, and though you may be tempted to cherish doubts of the extent of his power and grace, say with him of old, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." Lay aside, as far as possible, every other concern; postpone your attention to every other object, till you have reason to believe you have obtained mercy, and are renewed in the spirit of your mind. Address the throne of grace with unceasing importunity, remembering who hath said, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find. Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." In all your addresses to God, make use of the name and intercession of Christ, plead the efficacy of his blood, and the encouragement he hath afforded sinners, in his gospel, to return to God. Keep a continual watch over your words, thoughts, and actions; keep your heart with all diligence. Guard with the utmost care against levity and sloth, two most dangerous snares to the souls of men.

If you ask how you may know whether you are partakers of the special grace of God; we reply, This will be best ascertained by its fruits. When you feel a fixed hatred of sin, an intense thirst after holiness and perfection, and a delight in the word and ways of God; when you are habitually disposed to dwell on the thoughts of Christ and heaven; when the Saviour appears unspeakably precious, as the pearl of great price, and you are habitually ready to part with every thing for his sake, you may be certain

that you are born of God. These are the fruits of the Spirit, which sufficiently demonstrate the influence and presence of that blessed Agent. Till you have experienced effects of this kind, you are in a wretched state, though surrounded with all the brightest earthly prospects, because you are estranged from God, and exposed to his eternal wrath and displeasure.

Eternal Spirit! we confess
And sing the wonders of thy grace,
Thy power conveys our blessings down
From God the Father and the Son.

Enlightened by thine heavenly ray,
Our shades and darkness turn to day;
Thine inward teachings make us know
Our danger and our refuge too.

Thy power and glory works within,
And breaks the chains of reigning sin,
Doth our imperious lusts subdue,
And forms our wretched hearts anew.

The troubled conscience knows thy voice,
Thy cheering words awake our joys;
Thy words allay the stormy wind,
And calm the surges of the mind.—Dr. Watts

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No. 311

ON

THE POWER AND GRACE

OF

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14.

THE object of this tract, is to tell you a little about the power and grace of God the Holy Spirit, and what he graciously vouchsafes to do for poor lost sinners, such as you and ourselves. Perhaps you cannot read the blessed bible; but if you are in the habit of going to the house of God, you must have heard of this subject before. But it may be, that hitherto you have not thought at all on it: till this very day, you may have lived ignorant of the danger your soul is in, if a stranger to the influence of the Spirit of God.

Throughout the scriptures, the sinner in his natural state is described as in the condition of a dead body; it sees not, hears not, heeds not; and is without the power even to wish or to will for power, Eph. ii. 2. Permit us, therefore, affectionately to entreat you, before we proceed, to pause a moment, and lift up your heart in this short prayer: "O Lord, open my blind eyes; take away the heart of stone which makes me so careless and indifferent about the salvation of my soul." And O that this may be the beginning of days unto you! for, "only while we pray we live." Blessed be God, millions and millions, now before the throne of glory, found room in a Father's heart, in his love, and in his house; and there is enough and to spare for you, and for the whole perishing world, if they would

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only come, and know, for your comfort, that though the darkness of your mind, the unbelief and impenitence of your heart may be as mountains, yet shall they flow down at the presence of God the Holy Spirit, Isa. lxiv. 1.

My dear fellow-sinner, "we have a message from God unto thee." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3. Now this blessed, mighty change, can only be effected by the grace of the Spirit, all powerful and free, as the wind that bloweth where it listeth. It is his almighty power alone which can change the current of your affections. This is his glorious work: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you," Ezek. xxxvi. 26. The heart, in scripture, means the understanding, memory, will, and affections. The Holy Spirit has the key of the heart: as the understanding of the disciples was opened, that they might understand the scriptures, Luke xxiv. 45. so can he open yours; and your memory can be sanctified and strengthened to hold heavenly things. He can change your will, as Matthew's was changed, when he arose from the love of sin and earthly things, and followed Jesus; and, with the blessed apostle Paul, "so set your affections on Christ," that you "will count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord," Philip. iii. 8. Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; for your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, Luke xi. 13.

Perhaps the language of your heart may be, "Surely this is too good news to be true; O that I could pray, but I cannot!" Fear not; be of good courage; "let not your heart be troubled:" every promise is a staff for a poor needy sinner to lean upon, and may this gracious promise be written on your heart, as with the pen of a diamond, that the Holy Spirit will teach you how to pray! Rom. viii. 26. Draw near to the throne of grace in the adorable name of Jesus; without him God will give you nothing, but with him, God will freely give you all things, Rom. viii. 32. "I will throw myself at the feet of Jesus," exclaimed, again and again, a saint, now bending before him with a crown of glory; "I will cast myself at the FOOT OF THE CROSS, and if I perish, I will perish there." She was told, "that if she perished there, she would be the first soul that ever perished clinging to the cross, and that heaven and earth must sooner

pass away than one single word of God's promises to poor penitent sinners should fail."

The promises are scattered like pearls through the blessed bible, suited to all the wants of our needy souls. What a covenant God promises to do for the sinner, is the best blessing a sinner can ask of God: this tells us what to ask, and gives us words. Pray that the Spirit of grace and of supplication may be poured out upon you, Zech. xii. Open your bible, and spread "the exceeding great and precious promises," 2 Peter i. 4. before the throne of mercy, as the afflicted and pious king Hezekiah spread his letter, Isa. xxxvii. 14. and say, "Lord, do as thou hast said," 2 Sam. vii. 25. and a faithful God will do for you and in you as he has written.

Turn to the 16th chapter of John, and you will find the work of the Spirit placed before your eyes, in all its sweetness and fulness and glory. It is a promise more precious "than thousands of gold and silver," and may make the poor, needy, helpless sinner "sing for joy of heart," Isa. lxv. 14. that the Holy Spirit shall glorify Christ, by taking of the things which are his, and show them unto us. He will guide you into all truth; he will convince of sin. Pray that you may feel that you are a sinner by nature and practice, and see that you have been guilty of the greatest of all sins, that of not believing in the Son of God. The blood of Jesus is the blood of Him who is God, Acts xx. 28. and, therefore, "cleanseth from all sin," 1 John i. 7. O cast your soul by faith then at his feet, and say, "Lord, do as thou hast said;" wash my sins away in thy precious blood: and ask the Holy Spirit to fill your soul with all joy and peace in believing. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, Rom. viii. 1. His righteousness is the righteousness of God, Rom. iii. 22. and therefore is sufficient to justify the most ungodly: pray that you may be clothed in that spotless robe, in which you can enter the gates of everlasting glory, and stand accepted before the King of kings. Whom God justifies, he also sanctifies. The Holy Spirit, by giving you the new heart, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. will cause you to hate and forsake those sins which murdered the Lord of life and glory: this will lead you often to bend the knee, and oftener to lift up your heart in David's petition "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins;

cleanse thou me from secret faults," Psal. xix. and that the precious promise, "I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts," Heb. viii. 10. may be your blessed experience; that Jesus may reign alone, "the Lord of every motion there."

O when you think of these "unsearchable riches of the grace of Christ," pardon, holiness, and heaven offered to you, without money and without price, does not "your heart burn within you?" Luke xxiv. Do you not long to feel as the psalmist felt, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire in comparison of thee?" Psal. lxxiii. Yes, if your ears have been unstopped to hear your agonizing Saviour's groans in Gethsemane, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done;" and to hear that doleful cry on Mount Calvary, "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" We say, if the Spirit applies this to your heart, and makes you feel that "it was for sins that you have done, he bled and suffered there," you will, as Joseph did, make haste and seek where to weep, and you will enter into your chamber and weep there, Gen. xliii. 30.

Be not cast down, though your prayers may not be immediately answered. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure; delays are not denials: they are designed to strengthen your faith, to deepen humiliation, to bring you to a more simple dependence on the grace of God, and to make the blessing sweeter when bestowed. Though your faith in Christ's finished salvation be only as "a grain of mustard seed," your hope in his promises, like "smoaking flax," ready to expire, and your love to his blessed name and word and service cold and languid; go on to pray, and God will go on to bless. Take the prophet's servant for your example and encouragement: go again seven times; the little cloud that arose out of the sea, like a man's hand, gave the forerunner sound of abundance of rain, 1 Kings xviii. 42, 43.

O watch and pray, to give evidence, day by day, and every hour of the day, that you have found an interest in the precious Saviour, or, in other words, that you are partaker of pardoning mercy and renewing grace, by striving "to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things," Titus ii. A christian indeed will act consistently with his

profession in all the relative and social duties of life; he will be found a dutiful child, an affectionate husband, a tender parent, a kind neighbour, and a faithful servant, Eph. vi. 1, 2. v. 25. vi. 4—6. Matt. vii. 12. As a subject, quiet and peaceable; fearing God, he will "honour the king," and yield willing obedience to all in lawful authority under him," 1 Peter ii. 13—17. and "meddle not with them that are given to change," Prov. xxiv. 21. Whatever his calling may be among various occupations too numerous to particularize; be it behind the counter, attendance in a workshop, a ploughman, a day-labourer, or by whatever name it is known, he will strive to be the best in the parish, because the "servant of Christ" is commanded to be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, Rom. xii. 11. "not with eye-service, as men-pleasers," Eph. vi. 6. His eye will be continually directed to please his heavenly Master, "who withdraweth not his eyes from him," Job xxxvi. 7. He will feel as Hagar felt, "Thou, God, seest me," Gen. xvi. 13. He will see it as it were engraven on every object around him, and the delightful thought—

"Within thy circling arms I stand,
On ev'ry side I feel thy hand;
Asleep, awake, at home, abroad,
I am surrounded still with God, Ps. cxxxix.

will prove a shield from sin, and "the joy and the rejoicing of his heart," Jer. xv. 16.

The apostle enjoins us to continue instant in prayer, Rom. xii. 12. as the only means to preserve the enjoyment of every privilege, to keep us faithful in duty, and to enable us to do worldly things with a spiritual mind. "A saint indeed" will, therefore, earnestly pray that while he gives his hands to the world, his heart may be devoted to God. When, through preserving mercy, he awakes in the morning, he will think of the grace another day will require—the grace its duties will require—the grace its trials will require—the grace its temptations will require; and he knows that there is nothing with which he may have any concern in the day, however harmless in itself, but will prove an occasion of sinning and falling, unless he is "kept by the almighty power of God." To the eye of a man who knows nothing about the matter, he may go through

duty and trial and temptation outwardly as a christian, but spiritually, he can do nothing without the influence of the Holy Spirit. See 1 Peter i. 5. John xv. 5. He will, therefore, earnestly pray, that his presence may be with him all the day, to bring his thoughts and words and actions into conformity to the will of his Lord and Saviour, "who has left us an example that we should follow his steps," 1 Pet. ii. 21. His heart will long to learn of the "meek and lowly" Jesus in all things, and wherever the sacred print of his footsteps appears, there will he strive to plant his own. The question will often be asked during the day, if thinking, how the Saviour would have thought? when speaking, what he would have said? when acting, what he would have done? "A christian indeed" "whether he be sitting in the house, or walking by the way," or however his hands may be employed, will frequently be lifting up his heart for the supplies of grace his circumstances may require, in such short petitions—"O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes: my soul cleaveth to the dust; quicken thou me, according to thy word." "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe," Psal. cxix. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 6. "Teach me to cast this burden upon thee, for thou wilt sustain me," Psal. lv. 22. "Lord, remember me, now that thou art in thy kingdom," Luke xxiii. 42. "When my heart is overwhelmed within me, lead me to the rock that is higher than I," Psal. lxi. 2. "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me," Psal. cxxxviii. 7. As my days, so may my strength be, Deut. xxxiii. 25.

Take the example of Hannah for this habit of secret prayer, 1 Sam. i. 13. "She spake in her heart, her voice was not heard;" also of Nehemiah, chap. ii. 4. "So I prayed to the God of heaven." Secret prayer keeps the channel of communication open between heaven and the soul; sweetens all the toils, and lessons every burden of life, for, "in the multitude of our thoughts within us," the consolations and presence of the word and Spirit of God, cheer and support and refresh the soul, Psal. xciv. 19. And oh how delightful is it "when our soul is much discouraged because of the way," Numb. xxi. 4. it may be either from "fightings without, or fears within," to hear a voice, sweeter than heavenly melody, saying, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God," Isa. xli. 10. I am leading thee

forth by the right way to go to a city of habitation, Psal. cvii. 7. All things work together for your infinite and everlasting good, and for the glory of God's own great name, Rom. viii. 28.

"A christian indeed" will reverence the sabbath. The blessed day will be to him "the best of all the seven;" and knowing that the Lord calls ALL the hours his own, he will watch and pray to honour him, by not doing his own ways, nor finding his own pleasure, nor speaking his own words, on that most holy day, Isa. lviii. 13. He will reverence the worship of Almighty God; it will rejoice his heart to go up to the house of the Lord, where "the King himself draws near to feast his saints" with his word and presence. He will reverence the precious book of God: he will read a portion of it daily, and will long to esteem it more than his necessary food, Job xxiii. 12. and sweeter will the bible be to his taste than honey from the honey-comb, Psal. cxix. He will remember, both in hearing sermons, or in reading the scriptures, that "except the outward call of the word is accompanied with the inward call of the Spirit, it is a lock without a key; it profiteth nothing, though he may hear and read from one year's end to another." Therefore he will not engage in either without earnest supplication that the Holy Spirit may be the interpreter of his own word, and powerfully apply it to his conscience and heart; that it may prove a light to his feet, and a lamp to his paths, and cause him to bring forth fruit a hundred-fold, to the glory and praise of God's most holy name.

The writer of this tract knows one, poor in this world's goods but "rich indeed in faith," whose love for, and knowledge of her bible are so great, that she seems almost to think in scripture language. She never eats her breakfast, or dinner, or supper, without first reading a chapter. She cannot write, but, to supply this want, her constant practice, for many years, has been to draw a chalk line on the inner door of her humble cottage, after any day of particular spiritual enjoyment, or on receiving an unexpected providential mercy. She frequently looks over all these lines, to remind her of God's goodness; that she

> "May praise him for all that is past,
> And trust him for all that's to come."

"A christian indeed" will not merely "pray without

ceasing" for himself, but he will pray much, that the Holy Spirit may pour out of his enlightening and sanctifying and comforting influences on all dear and near to him; on his minister, and the congregation committed to his care; on his king and country; on the whole church of Christ, wheresoever, or howsoever disposed of throughout all the earth and on "a world lying in wickedness." Finding the throne of grace the best place where a sinner can be ere he reach a throne of glory; he will use his utmost endeavours to induce others to pray for themselves, "to search the scriptures," and to attend the public worship of God; and thus, in conduct and exertion, speak to them, as Moses is said to have done of old, to Hobab the son of Raguel, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel," Num. x. 29.

"A christian indeed," while he is taking up every duty in point of performance, will lay them all down as a ground of dependence for acceptance with God. The words of the pious bishop Beveridge will best express the feelings of his heart: "I cannot pray but I sin; I cannot hear a sermon but I sin; I cannot give an alms, or receive the sacrament, but I sin; nay, I cannot so much as confess my sins, but my very confessions are still aggravations of them: my repentance needs to be repented of; my tears want washing; and the very washing of my tears needs still to be washed over again in the blood of my Redeemer: I look upon all my righteousness as filthy rags and it is in the robes only of the righteousness of the Son of God, that I dare appear before the Majesty of heaven."

Unto God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be ascribed everlasting praises. Amen, and amen.

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CONSIDER YOUR WAYS.

HAGGAI i. 5.

CONSIDER your ways. Are you wicked? thus saith the Lord who formed you, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God," Psa. ix. 17. Are you swearers? hear what God saith: "Because of swearing the land mourneth," Jer. xxiii. 10; Zech. v. 3. Are you adulterers? "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," Heb. xiii. 4; Eph. v. 5; Rev. xxii. 15. "The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8.

You that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; who see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; consider, that it is the Lord, who made you, that commande h and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof; you mount up to the heavens, you go down again to the depths; your soul is melted because of trouble; you reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at your wit's end. Then, if you can pray, you cry unto the Lord in your trouble, and he bringeth you out of your distresses; he maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still, then you are glad, because they be quiet: so he bringeth you unto your desired haven. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Psa. cvii. 23—31.

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56, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65, ST PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

Consider the sea, the great and wide sea, as an emblem of the great abyss, the bottomless pit, Rev. xx. 3—15; the lake of fire and brimstone, Rev. xix. 20. Hell, that is prepared for the workers of iniquity, Matt. v. 22—29; x. 28; Prov. v. 5; vii. 27; ix. 18; Job xxxi. 3.

Consider: is your name, your practice, pointed out in any of the above characters, unto which the sentence, the dreadful sentence of eternal wrath, the second death, everlasting punishment, stands annexed? Consider, who can dwell with devouring fire? who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Isa. xxxiii. 14. So living, and so dying, you must for ever dwell, (oh solemn words!) for ever dwell with devouring fire, yet never be devoured! you must dwell with everlasting burnings, yet never be consumed; your existence and your torments equally eternal; everlasting, without mitigation; not one drop of water to cool that tongue, which has so often been set on fire of hell, and employed in the service of the devil, in profaning the sacred name, yea, blaspheming the God that made you! Luke xvi. 23, 24.

Let me entreat you: oh that I could prevail with you! For the Lord's sake, for your precious soul's sake, attend to Divine counsel. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways." "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat," Matt. vii. 13. Are you of this number? Is this the way that you are in? Yes, if you live in the commission and allowance of any known sin, you are in the direct way to hell, the high road to destruction. How can you tell but this night your soul may be required of you? Luke xii. 20; and you may lift up your eyes in torments before morning, Luke xvi. 23; where the stinging worm of a guilty conscience will never die, and the fire of that Divine wrath, which your sins have kindled, will never be quenched! Deut. xxxiii. 22. How can you tell, but in the next storm your body may sink to the bottom of the sea, and

your soul into the bottomless pit—from whence no man can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him? The redemption of the soul is precious, and then ceaseth for ever, Psa. xlix. 8.

O, my dear reader, has what you have read made any impression upon you for conviction? Oh that you might be enabled so to consider, as to say, with the psalmist, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies!" Psa. cxix. 59.

But is it otherwise? Does your heart continue hard and untouched? Are you still proof against all the foregoing awful sentences proceeding from that God, with whom is terrible majesty; who will be known by the judgments that he will execute on all rejecters of his counsel? Job xxxvii. 22; Joel ii. 11; Rev. vi. 16, 17; John xii. 48; Luke xix. 27. Remember, that "God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors," Psa. vii. 11—13. Your life is short and uncertain. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. He will come certainly, and suddenly, Matt. xxiv. 44; Mark xiii. 33—36. The Lord Jesus Christ, who formed you; on whom you continually depend for life, breath and being; whose majesty you have offended by every sin you have committed; whose justice you have thereby provoked; whose mercy you have highly abused; whose laws you have transgressed! Consider, oh think of it, I beseech you, how will you be able to stand, when the great day of his wrath shall come? for he will be "revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," 2 Thess. i. 7—10; Rev. vi. 16, 17.

Dear reader, have you read thus far without any serious concern about your precious and immortal soul? Does what has been said make no more impression upon your mind, than that mighty tempest did upon Jonah, when fast asleep in the ship, when it was ready to be broken? If this be the case, give me leave to address you as the shipmaster did Jonah: "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise: call upon thy God," Jonah i. 6. Perhaps it is now a calm, but, in a little time, He who turns the storm into a calm, may turn the calm into a storm. The clouds will gather; the stormy, the great day of God's wrath will certainly come; and who shall be able to stand? Not the drunkard; nor the adulterer, nor the whoremonger, nor the covetous, nor the idolater, nor swearers, nor liars, nor he who taketh God's name in vain, Exod. xx. 7. Be persuaded, frequently and seriously to consider the forementioned scriptures, Rev. vi. 16, 17; xxi. 8. Once more: What meanest thou, O sleeper? Will nothing but the flames of the burning lake awake thee, as was the case with him who lived in a dead sleep on earth, awoke in hell, and lifted up his eyes in torments? Luke xvi. 23.

Had you a dear friend asleep at the mast top, when a storm was approaching, would you not be in pain for him? and yet you feel no pain, nor concern for your own soul, your precious and immortal soul, hanging over the great abyss, the bottomless pit, the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, by the slender line of an uncertain life, which may this night be cut by death; and then, if unreconciled to God, you sink into endless torments.

Should you see a friend, whom you loved, walking in a dark night in a path, at the end of which he did not know (but you knew) there was a bottomless pit, into which he must certainly fall, and out of which

he could never get, would you not use your utmost endeavour to warn your friend of his danger, and prevent his ruin?

A friend to your precious and immortal soul has no other end in this paper, than using the best means he can in order to prevent your eternal ruin. If you live in sin, remember the bottomless pit of hell is at the end of the very path in which you walk, into which you will certainly fall, if you do not forsake your sins, and turn unto the Lord by repentance, who bids you cease to do evil, and learn to do well, Isa. i. 16, 17.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways."

Query. What think you of your ways? Are you in the way to hell? Stop, man: go no further, lest by a few steps more you drop down the unseen precipice, into the burning lake, from which there will be no deliverance. If it please the Author of salvation to bless the foregoing hints for your conviction, you will cry to the God that made you, under a sense of your sins, as the publican; who, under a conviction of guilt, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Luke xviii. 13. Oh that you would go and do likewise!

'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," yea the chief of sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15. Jesus, the dear Saviour of sinners, has by his atoning sacrifice, and his spotless obedience, finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness for all who forsake their sins, and come unto him for righteousness and strength, for life and salvation; to whom, upon this foundation, he says, even to the chief of sinners, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isa. i. 18. "Seek

ye the Lord, while he may be found: call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 6, 7. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else," Isa. xlv. 22. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," Matt. ix. 13. "Repent ye, and believe the gospel," Mark i. 14, 15. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 14—16, 36.

Perhaps you will say, "I have spent a life in sin and rebellion against God; can there be mercy for me?"—Jesus Christ is ascended on high; he hath led captivity captive, he hath received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them, Psa. lxviii. 18. These gifts are grace and glory, Psa. lxxxiv. 11: repentance and remission of sins, Acts v. 31; xi. 18: eternal life, Rom. vi. 23: a crown of life, Rev. ii. 10; Luke xii. 32.—"But I have a hard heart, and cannot repent." Pray to God until he make your heart soft, Job xxiii. 16. Tell him that he has promised to take away the stony heart, Ezek. xi. 19, and to give a new heart, Ezek. xxxvi. 26.—"But I am blind and ignorant." "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind," Psa. cxlvi. 8; and says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them," Isa xlii. 16. Do as the two blind men did: see Matt. xx. 30—34. Jesus Christ, when on earth, never turned any away who came to him for the cure of bodily diseases, neither

does he now reject any that come unto him for the cure of soul diseases. "Arise, he calleth you," Mark x. 49. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matt. xi. 28, 29. 'Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," John vii. 37. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," Isa. lv. 1. "Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely," Rev. xxii. 17. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," John vi. 37.

You either comply with, or reject the forementioned words and counsel of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners.

If you comply with his counsel, and accept his invitations, thus saith the Lord: "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honours are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures. By humility and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life," Prov. viii. 17—21; xxii. 4.

But to the rejecters of his counsel, he saith, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat

of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them," Prov. i. 24—32.

Repent, (the voice celestial cries,)
Nor longer dare delay;
The wretch that scorns the mandate dies,
And meets a fiery day.

No more the sovereign eye of God.
O'erlooks the crimes of men;
His heralds are despatched abroad,
To warn the world of sin.

Then in his awful presence bow,
And all your guilt confess;
Embrace the blessed Saviour now,
Nor trifle with his grace.

Bow, ere the dreadful trumpet sound,
And call you to his bar;
For mercy knows the appointed bound,
And turns to vengeance there.

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THE HEART DEMANDED.

BY THE LATE REV. ROBERT HALL, A.M.

"My son, give me thine heart," PROVERBS xxiii. 26.

ALL kinds of false religion which have been practised in the world may be resolved into a vain attempt to supply the place of giving the heart to God. The superstitions of the church of Rome, the fantastic ceremonies and rites practised by Mohammedans and many classes of pagans, the penances and mortifications on which so many rely, but which cease where the light of Divine truth prevails, are but substitutes for the simple duty of giving God the heart. It is of the utmost importance to trace all religious conduct to its source, and to fix in our minds that this is the root of all piety which is acceptable to God, the giving him our heart.

Let me propose for your consideration a few of the reasons and grounds on which this duty is obligatory.

In the first place, God deserves our hearts. He is entitled to them by claims which it is impossible to resist. The favours we receive from God bind us by grateful attachment to give him our hearts. All the blessings we have enjoyed in the course of our existence, all we now enjoy, and all we hope to partake of, flow from the unmerited bounty of our heavenly Father. From him cometh every good and perfect gift, Jas. i. 17. The care and tenderness bestowed by Providence upon our earliest years, it is evident, we had no share in procuring. It was God who poured

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that tenderness into the hearts of our parents, of which we received the benefit. It was God who conferred upon us all those blessings which have distinguished us in the subsequent years of our lives, who raised up all those connexions and friends, and endearing relations in life, from which our comforts have sprung. He is the Cause of all causes, the ultimate Spring of all good, though he uses second means; the Benefactor and the Author of all being. If, then, there be any claim which gratitude has upon our hearts, this claim is enforced by God.

Besides, the infinite excellences of the Divine nature themselves are such as challenge our highest regard. All that is excellent in the creature is derived from God. The lustre of his perfections eclipses every thing in heaven or on earth. The beauty of his character is such as, when properly perceived, excites the highest admiration, and fills up the whole centre of perfection. God, separate from the benefits derived from him, is in himself entitled to our highest esteem.

In the second place, we ought to give God our hearts, because this is the great and principal demand he makes upon us. He is not only entitled to our hearts, but he demands them at our hands. This is the principal requisition he makes of sinful men, "My son, give me thine heart." This is the sum and substance of all the precepts of the Divine law. When God solemnly delivered his laws to the children of Israel in the wilderness, this was the principal, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This," says our Saviour, in explaining the law, "is the first and great commandment," Matt. xxii. 37, 38. All the precepts of religion are summed up in this, because a love to our fellow-creatures

dictates an attention to all those subordinate rules of general conduct upon which their happiness depends. "Love is the fulfilling of the law;" it works no ill to its neighbour, Rom. xiii. 10; and so love to God implies a coincidence of our will with his, the patient endurance of all he inflicts, and the prompt discharge of all he prescribes—the due homage and affection of worship, not merely the prostration of the body and the language of the lips, but the expression of the heart; the root of all clearly is the heart. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart," 1 Sam. xvi. 7. All the substitutes which men can possibly devise, where the heart is not really devoted to God, will be of no account in his sight. The language of the deepest humiliation and the expression of the most ardent attachment, will be an abomination in the sight of God, if the heart does not accompany them, if they are not streams proceeding by a direct course from that fountain. He strips off every disguise, and looks to the heart. This is the great requisition the Divine Being makes at our hands. He asks not splendid temples, costly sacrifices, nor pompous forms of worship. The universe is so formed as in many respects to reflect his glory and grandeur; but nothing in created nature, nothing in external worship, is acceptable to him, where the heart is foreign and alien to him. There is no place so satisfactory for him to rest in as the heart of his intelligent creatures: a mind penetrated with a sense of sin, touched with gratitude, glowing with love, and prostrating itself in the deepest humiliation before him—this is the place of his rest, and he bows the heaven itself, and comes down to take possession of such a temple as is furnished by the heart of that man.

Another reason why we should give him our hearts,

is, that he alone can fill our hearts. There is nothing out of God that is sufficiently capacious and permanent to fill the heart of man. The natural heart forms to itself ideas of happiness that never will be realized, notions of felicity to which there is nothing answerable in the whole circle of created things. It dwells, as it were, in a land of shadows, and images to itself a greatness which the infinite abysses of space are not able to comprehend. Nothing can satisfy that general thirst after happiness which exists where God is not apprehended and enjoyed. Ask that man who has been the most successful in his worldly affairs, whether he has had his heart filled with its objects. Ask the avaricious man, whether he has accumulated wealth enough to fill the void in his heart. He has engrossed much of it, but he is not satisfied. Ask the ambitious man whether he is satisfied with honour, whether he has enough of the applause of the world, whether power has poured itself upon him in a sufficiently copious stream. So far from it, it has only irritated his passions, and rendered him more susceptible of censure, more touched by contempt, more affected by reproach. The void in his heart widens, and he becomes more eager after glory. Thus it is that there is a void in the human heart, which is never completely satisfied until the love of God is shed abroad there. The chasm widens in proportion as created objects fall into it. The particular appetite may be satisfied for the moment, but the thirst after general happiness is increased. But God is sufficient to fill the heart of man—yes, of all men—and to diffuse rapture and joy over the inhabitants of heaven itself. No mind is so capacious, no heart is so large and extensive that God cannot fill it; no desire so great, but there is sufficient in the beneficence of God to satisfy it.

It is true, a good man always seeks after more of the enjoyment of God than he tastes in the present world; and, in this sense, his heart is not filled; but this is for want of a sufficient medium of communication between him and the Supreme Being. The deficiency is not in the object itself, but in the relation we bear to that object, and the imperfect communication we have at present with it. The ocean is sufficiently immense, but there are impediments that obstruct the streams, that prevent their entrance into our heart. Nothing will fill the heart but God. The experience of all ages, the vanity of life, the restlessness of the human passions, the disorders introduced by sin, and the conviction of a future state, all tend to teach us that God is the only adequate and sufficient portion of the human mind.

Again: we ought to give our hearts to God as a certain means, and the only means, of introducing peace into our hearts. When we have given our hearts to God, and he is enthroned there, the necessary consequence will be, a degree of peace will prevail there. Until this is effected, there will be a collision and an interference between the claims of religion and those of the world, which can never be adjusted. There will be a contradiction between the convictions of conscience, those convictions which depravity can never totally erase, and the unsanctified desires of the mind, which can never be reconciled. The Jews were accustomed to offer their salutations to their friends in these terms, "Peace be with you." In doing this, they expressed a wish that their friends might possess all those good things which friendship could dictate. They wished them health, peace of conscience, the favour of the Supreme Being; every thing was comprehended in the term "peace." But the Scriptures tell us that

the wicked have no peace: "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," Isa. lvii. 21. This is equivalent to saying that the wicked have no true happiness; for in denying that they have peace, the Scriptures deny that they have true happiness. And this will appear to be the case the more we explore the subject. Conscience will be heard, and her "still small voice" will destroy all peace. The consciousness that a man is not right, that he is under the threat of God, will destroy his enjoyment, perplex his mind, and fill him with inward confusion. He will read his character, as Belshazzar did, on the wall even of a palace. Oh, how many things may, in the hand of God, be the means of bringing his sins to his remembrance, and of disquieting his mind; so that even in the midst of mirth his heart is heavy, and the countenance betrays the tumult of the soul.

Besides this, there will be a predominance of anxiety arising from the very nature of worldly care, until we have given our hearts to God. The solicitude about the affairs of the world will grow and strengthen till it becomes overwhelming. The love of God is the master passion which will cast out the evil and tormenting effects of worldly care. The solicitude, the restlessness, and anxiety, of which many men appear to be the subjects, are not the effect of any great calamity, but of the constant insecurity with which earthly things are held; and nothing will cure this great disease of the mind but the love of God.

In addition to this, the edge of the calamities of life will be blunted by giving our hearts to God. He who has given his heart to God, is secure with respect to his main interest. He is able, after every calamity, to go into the sanctuary, and sing, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the

vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation," Hab. iii. 17, 18. Yes, he will rejoice in God as his salvation. He carries his riches with him, because he is rich towards God; his happiness with him, because no being can destroy it. No angel can step between him and the eternal throne, and intercept his prayers or the communications of the Divine favour. The love of God shed abroad in his heart, and the influences of the Divine Spirit, are the great means of allaying the anxiety of the human mind, and of introducing peace and serenity, a peace which "passeth all understanding," joy and peace in believing.

Also, if we give our hearts to God, this will render a compliance with every other demand of the Divine Being easy and delightful. Giving our hearts to God will have a mighty influence to make every other part of the Divine requisitions satisfactory and easy. When love to God is planted in the heart, the fruits of righteousness will spring up in rich abundance. This is a seed of immortal vigour. When love to God prevails in the heart, the duties of religion, instead of being matters of servile restraint, will be the most pleasing occupation of the mind. To retire for self-examination, for prayer and meditation, and reading the Scriptures, will not be painful to that man who has given his heart to God. It will be the child hiding himself beneath the wing of paternal love. It will be the confidential intercourse of love and affection. It will be to go from care, and vanity, and vexation, to God as his chief joy. The love of God having thus touched the heart, though before hard as a rock, the streams will flow. What is the cause of our public assemblies exhibiting so little

piety, so much coldness and indifference to Divine things? What is the reason of that languid attention we so often witness? Does it not arise from the heart not being given to God? How different is this from the general assembly of the church above! There all is love, and all is joy. David rejoiced at the thought of engaging with his friends in the worship of God, because he felt supreme delight in God. He could say, "I will go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy," Psa. xliii. 4. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," Psa. xxvii. 4. To forsake all and follow Christ, to deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow him, will be a duty utterly impracticable unless we have given up our hearts to him; our conduct will be determined by the state of our heart. We cannot forsake all for God, unless we have first given God our hearts.

Another peculiar reason for giving our hearts to God is, because the Divine Being has manifested himself to us under such characters as are calculated to attract our hearts. Did God appear in Scripture in no other character than that of an avenging Judge, it would be impossible to give him our hearts, upon the principles at least of human nature; but "God is love," 1 John iv. 8. "God was in Christ," before the world began, "reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 19. It is the peculiarity of the gospel, that while it represents God in all the terrors of his justice, these are united with all the riches of his mercy. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16.

He was pleased to compassionate us in our sinful state. He spreads out the arms of paternal tenderness to us. His language is, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else," Isa. xlv. 22. "Fury is not in me," Isa. xxvii. 4. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 7. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," ver. 1. This is the language of Divine mercy; and is it not calculated, especially when connected with the fact of the only begotten Son of God dying on the cross, to attract our hearts? Is it not calculated to destroy enmity, to speak peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are nigh? There is no impediment, then, with God; the impediment is only in ourselves.

In the last place, I would observe, as another inducement to give our hearts to God, that it will be the most effectual preparation for death and eternity. Could the sinner flatter himself that he could for ever remain at a distance from God, he might anticipate a sort of peace without giving his heart to God, though he would be disappointed in the result; but you must meet God as your friend or your enemy. Your subjection to him cannot be thrown off. It lies with you, then, in what character you meet him. Meet him you must; and how awful will it be to depart from this world without having given your hearts to God! To meet him as your enemy! to appear before him with the alienation of your hearts unsubdued! to find yourselves in the presence of that Being who rules in

heaven and on earth, and whose power none can withstand, when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat!" 2 Pet. iii. 10. Oh, how awful will it be, if you have not obtained peace with God, if you have not given your heart to him! You feel now, that to meet him is terrible, because you are conscious that you are at enmity with him; but when you can no longer keep at a distance from him, what will it be to meet him? You will call upon the rocks to fall upon you, to hide you from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. vi. 16; to hide you from the presence of your Judge! The sinner who dies without having given his heart to God, will then meet with the full accomplishment of his wishes. His great desire has been to keep at a distance from God, and this will be awfully realized. He has been invited to come into the presence of God, invited in the tenderest accents; but he has refused, and now he will be summoned into that presence with a voice which will strike terror into his soul, and then will be banished for ever from him. God will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41. He wished to have no intercourse with God, and now God will have no intercourse with him. An everlasting gulf will be fixed between God and him, and he will then find that absence from God is the perfection of misery and woe. But, on the contrary, if our hearts are now given to God, death will be a source of the most delightful satisfaction. When death removes a good man from the present world, it carries him to his Father's house. While it removes the wicked man from all he loved, it removes the good man from all that afflicted him here; the wicked man is hurried

away from all his treasures, while the good man is stripped only of his infirmities and sufferings. Every day the Christian is advancing nearer to his ultimate good. He considers life as a journey, a pilgrimage; and looks to the end of it with satisfaction and delight. He now enjoys that good which he eagerly sought on earth. He reaps the full reward of all his prayers and all his sufferings. His language while on earth was, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," Psa. xvii. 15; and now the auspicious morn is come.

What is the reason that death is viewed with such different feelings by the good man and the bad? It is because of the different state of their hearts towards God. It is this difference which, in the one case, covers futurity with clouds, and darkness, and horror; and, in the other, makes it the region of peace, and light, and happiness.

To conclude: whatever wears the appearance of piety in your estimation, which does not lead your heart to God, be sure is deception and delusion. Whatever those doctrines are, whatever those practices are, whatever that company is, which has an habitual tendency to draw off our hearts from God, and make us esteem and love him less, be sure that that is the path of ruin and destruction. Consider every thing in religion as having this end, and this only—of leading you to God. This should be the sum and substance of religion. If you worship God in the assemblies of his people, and feel no movement of heart to him, be sure that it is a vain oblation and an abominable sacrifice. If you pray to God, and your hearts do not ascend to him, be sure he will say to you with indignation at the last day, "Who hath required this at your hand," Isa. i. 12. It is the homage of the

heart that he requires. This is his most acceptable sacrifice. Pray to God that he will give you a contrite heart, that he will plant his love there, that he will destroy the moral distance between you and him, and bring you so near to him that his perfections, and his providence, and his word, may have an abiding weight and reality in your estimation. Make it your constant prayer that the influence of creatures may be less, and the perfection and grace of God be more and more in your esteem.

If you were to view the conduct even of the greater part of professing Christians, you would think that nothing was reality but that which related to creatures, nothing delusion but that which relates to God. But how great the mistake! If our hearts are given to God, we shall regard every thing as full of God, we shall taste his smile in all his mercies, we shall bow with submission to the afflictions we are called to suffer, reflecting that they are inflicted by him. Death will appear to us as the messenger of God, sent to bring us into his presence, where there is fulness of joy. Life, death, things present, and things to come, will all bear the impress and the signature of God. We shall have peace with God, the peace that passeth understanding. Pray, therefore, with the apostle, that God will enlighten your understandings, that you may "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God," Eph. iii. 18, 19.

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No. 473.

SHOULD IT NOT BE MUST FOR THE SOUL?

READER,—One of the means of grace, which God has seen fit to appoint for the conversion of sinners, is the preaching of the gospel. Thus St. Paul speaks of it: "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," 1 Cor. i. 21; and again, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Rom. x. 17.

It is very plain, therefore, that those persons who stay away from public worship are depriving themselves of the appointed opportunities of hearing those truths which, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, might be blessed to the eternal welfare of their souls. Satan knows well the value of public worship, and its great importance as a means of grace; for by the preaching of the word, not only are the souls of believers fed, and strengthened, and nourished up unto eternal life, but the spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened into newness of life. One of Satan's snares and contrivances, therefore, is to keep the unconverted as much as possible from attending public worship. Unhappily, he has not much difficulty in doing this; for the consciences of the unconverted are easily satisfied with any excuse, and they love the world more than they love their souls.

The following dialogue, which took place between a minister and one of his careless parishioners, who had only just recovered from a dangerous illness, may perhaps help to show how weak and unfounded are those excuses which ungodly, careless persons, are too much in the habit of making, when they are told of the necessity of using those public means of grace which the Almighty has so mercifully provided for us, his sinful erring creatures. At the same time, the dialogue may perhaps further show that the real reason of people's neglecting public worship and disregarding the welfare of their souls, is "the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart," Eph. iv. 18. They

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consider the things of time, the "things which are seen," as of far more value than the things of eternity, "the things which are not seen."

Dialogue.

Minister. I hope, since God has mercifully spared you a little longer, that you will not neglect public worship as you have done hitherto, but that both you and your wife will become regular in your attendance.

Parishioner. It is quite right we should, sir; but we cannot very well come.

M. But why not? What should hinder you?

P. Why, sir, we cannot very well leave the children with the servant.

M. But how do you manage to leave your children on the market-day; for I know both you and your wife are sometimes away from home nearly the whole of that day?

P. Oh sir, we *must* go to market, we *must* attend to these things.

M. So you ought. But which do you think is of most value—the body or the soul?

P. The soul, sir: to be sure.

M. Well, then, should it not be *must* for the soul as well as *must* for the body?

P. You are quite right, sir: it ought.

It is easy to be seen, from the foregoing dialogue, that the careless parishioner could have attended public worship had he felt a real desire to do so, by using the same contrivance on the sabbath-day which he used on the market-day. This, reader, may be your case: there may be the same unwillingness on your part to use these blessed means. Perhaps you may be one of those who as yet have no taste for, and no desire after spiritual things; you may be yet in that state of nature in which you were born, a child of wrath, Eph. ii. 3; and therefore as one of the natural fruits of your unchanged nature, you either seldom attend public worship, or else entirely neglect it.

From the Scriptures it is plain that you cannot have any real delight in spiritual things as long as you are in an unconverted state; for our Lord says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," John iii. 6; and St. Paul thus writes, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but

they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit," Rom. viii. 5. Neither can you change your own heart, or turn yourselves to God by any strength of your own: the conversion of a soul is the work of God, (the work of the Holy Spirit, the third Person in the Trinity;) for thus are the persons spoken of who receive Christ, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, *but of God*," John i. 11—13. The Holy Spirit, however, works by the outward means of grace; and you have the power of attending upon them equally as much as you have of going to a market, or to a fair, or to any other place. As long, therefore, as you have health and strength to attend to your worldly affairs, and yet at the same time neglect public worship, you convict yourself of being in an unconverted state. And what are the consequences of being in that state? Have you ever considered them? You possess that "carnal mind" which "is enmity against God," Rom. viii. 7. You are "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," Rom. ix. 22; and your end will be this, (unless your souls be renewed by the Holy Ghost,) that you will be banished for ever from the presence of the Lord.

Consider, therefore, this important subject; and if your conscience convicts you of your past sinfulness, especially in neglecting public worship, endeavour to offer up in sincerity this prayer to God, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me," Psa. li. 10.

And now notice some of those events which the word of God assures us *must* take place; and in which you yourself, as well as every other human being, *must* have a part. May the consideration of these things lead you to see that you *must* think of your soul and *must* improve the means of grace.

1. *You must die.* Daily experience shows you the truth of this, as well as the word of God, from which you may take the following passage; "For we *must* needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person," 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

2. *You must stand at Christ's judgment seat.* There you *must* appear whether you be converted, or whether you be unconverted: for thus writes St. Paul, "For we *must* all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one

may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10. You cannot escape from these two events. Death may come at an hour when you are little expecting it. To you it may be said as it was to the careless worldling, spoken of by our Saviour, whose thoughts were entirely taken up with the affairs of this world, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," Luke xii. 20.

3. Consider also, that before you can have any scriptural hope of being saved, *your heart must be changed;* for our Lord says, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye *must* be born again," John iii. 7.

4. *You must have a true, lively faith, in our Lord Jesus Christ;* for if you ask the same question which the jailer at Philippi asked, "Sirs, what *must* I do to be saved?" the answer is this, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 30, 31.

5. But the proof that you do believe in Christ, and that your soul has been renewed by the Holy Spirit, *must* be shown by the spirituality of your minds; by the bringing forth in your daily conduct those fruits of the Spirit which are lovely and of good report in the sight of God; for our Lord in his discourse with the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well, thus says to her, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 23, 24. One part of spiritual worship, is the taking a spiritual delight in public worship. Hear what the spiritually minded psalmist says upon this subject; "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God," Psa. lxxxiv. 1, 2, and again in verse 10, "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Now, reader, say—Should it not be *must* for the soul? You *must* think of your soul, you *must* improve the means of grace "while it is called to-day."

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THE

WORTH OF THE SOUL.

THE soul of every man is of more worth to him than all the world. What would it profit him if he were to gain the whole world, were he thereby to lose his own soul? Such is the uncertainty of life, he might not long enjoy his power, his riches, and his pleasures. If he could possess all these, with health and friends, and live to very old age, an eternity then succeeds, and all that is past is but as a tale that is told, or as a dream of the night. For a small portion of the things of time men are all activity and life. They are ingenious in managing their trades, careful in preserving their health, and watchful in securing their property. But should the care of the soul be overlooked? Should the health of the soul be neglected? Should the future happiness of the soul be disregarded? How many have lost their souls through ignorance, impenitence, unbelief, disobedience, fleshly lusts, love of the world, fear of man, love of ease, or some profitable or pleasant sin, or neglect of the great salvation; yet how plain and decided are the oracles of God on all these points! Observe each in its order. On the subject of ignorance, it is said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee," Hos. iv. 6. Of impenitence, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Luke xiii. 3. Of unbelief, "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. Of disobedience, "To them that are contentious, and do not obey the

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truth, but obey unrighteousness, he will render indignation and wrath," Rom. ii. 8. Of fleshly lusts, "They war against the soul," 1 Pet. ii. 11. Of the world, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John ii. 15. Of the fear of man, "it bringeth a snare," Prov. xxix. 25. "The fearful and unbelieving shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," Rev. xxi. 8. Of the love of ease, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," Matt. xvi. 24. Of the profits or pleasures of sin, "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out," Mark x. 43, 47. Of neglect of salvation, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. ii. 3. On this point read also Prov. i. 24—33.

How striking are the examples recorded in the sacred oracles! Adam risked his soul, through desire of vain knowledge, Gen. iii. 6. Cain, through hatred to true religion, Heb. xi. 4. 1 John iii. 12. Achan, for a wedge of gold, Josh. vii. 21. Esau, for a mess of pottage, Heb. xii. 16. Balaam, for a reward, Jude 11. Absalom, for a kingdom, 2 Sam. xv. 10. Ahab, for a garden of herbs, 1 Kings xxi. 4. Judas, for thirty pieces of silver, Matt. xxvi. 14, 15. Ananias and Sapphira, through a lie, Acts v. 4. Herod, for vain glory, Acts xii. 22, 23. Pontius Pilate, for popularity, Mark xv. 15. The Gentiles in general, through a dislike to retain God in their knowledge, Rom. i. 28. And the Jews, through hypocrisy, self-righteousness, and unbelief, Matt. xvi. 3. Rom. x. 3. xi. 20.

Various are the baits that are employed by the great enemy of the human race. His designs are, to keep men in sin, or draw them from true religion, or hinder their peace and usefulness in the ways of God. His warlike stratagems and subtle snares are all to catch souls, Eph. vi. 11. 1 Pet. v. 8. Therefore, through the blessing of God, it may serve as a guard against our danger, if we consider the following things:

I. The nature of the soul. It is spiritual, and is designed for an eternal existence, Gen. ii. 7. It is formed to be the residence of truth, holiness, and happiness. It is capable of knowing, loving, and serving God, Deut. vi. 5; and nothing can render it truly happy but this knowledge, love, and service. Then how sad the consideration that error, sin, and misery should occupy it! If it lose an eternity of joy, how dreadful the reverse! It cannot cease to exist. It cannot be annihilated. It must endure positive pain. There is a "worm that dieth not, and a fire that is not quenched," Mark ix. 44. With what anguish will a ruined sinner cry, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof!" Prov. v. 12, 13. I was warned, but I disregarded the warning. I was invited, but I refused the invitation. I was entreated, but I neglected the entreaty. I was threatened, but I disbelieved the threatening. If an occasional thought of eternity obtruded itself, it was an unwelcome guest. I went to my farm, to my merchandise, to my pleasures, to my sins: but could find no time or inclination to go to my minister, my bible, my Saviour, my God. Evil spirits have been my tempters; they are now my companions and tormenters. I am without hope; darkness and despair have seized my soul: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved," Jer. viii. 20. My sins and negligence are set in dread array before me, and this is their desert. I see others entering into the kingdom of heaven, but I am shut out, Matt. xxv. 10. The only sound I hear from heaven, is, Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! Rev. xiv. 10, 11.

Thus, if we consider the capacity of the soul for happiness or misery, we may learn something of its nature and worth; and surely this ought to serve as a guard against neglect of its welfare. Shall we run into danger, and risk the loss of so invaluable a treasure? Shall we be content that it should remain doubtful whether we shall be saved or lost? Shall we take such a leap in the dark, when if we be found

wrong, there is no remedy? He who once loses his soul, loses his all. He is like a merchant whose ship sinks with all his property on board. A man may recover many losses on earth, but the loss of the soul is a loss never to be repaired. Once lost, lost for ever

Still more shall we discover its worth, if we consider,

II. The price of its redemption. O! learn the value of your souls by that astonishing truth, "God was manifest in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16. "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor," 2 Cor. viii. 9. He became "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," Isa. liii. 3. He tabernacled thirty-three years in our evil world. He was obedient to the law for man, Dan. ix. 24. He was made answerable for sin, 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. "He was wounded for our transgressions." "He was bruised for our iniquities." "He poured out his soul unto death," Isa. liii. 5—12. By all he did and suffered, by the mystery of his holy incarnation, by his holy nativity and circumcision, by his baptism, fasting, and temptation, by his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his precious death and burial, by his glorious resurrection and ascension, and by his second coming to judge the world, an infinite dignity and incalculable value are stamped on the soul. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ," 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Shall such a price be paid, and will you not regard your soul? If immortal souls were so precious in the sight of God, that he gave his only begotten Son, that through him they might be saved; if they were so valuable in the sight of the Divine Saviour, that he did not shrink from laying down his life for their sake, let then your own soul be precious in your own sight, and seek its present and everlasting salvation through him; for he freely offers you his salvation, yea beseeches you to accept it at his hands, 2 Cor. v. 20. and vi. 1.

To this end, let it be your immediate object to consider,

III. The means appointed for the soul's spiritual welfare. Ministers labour continually. "They watch for your souls as they that must give an account," Heb. xiii. 17. They are the appointed messengers of God to warn men to flee from the wrath to come, and to invite them to lay hold on eternal life, Col. i. 28 1 Tim. vi. 12. By them the blessing and the curse are continually set before you, Deut. xxx. 19. The gospel is preached, that faith may come by hearing, Rom. x. 17. And the Spirit of God waits to apply it, and make it effectual, Isa. xxx. 18. Rev. iii. 20. It is brought near, and its blessings freely offered, Rom. x. 8—13. and the consequences of neglecting it are fully stated, Acts iv. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. The holy scriptures are written "for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness," 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. They are an infallible guide, "a sure word of prophecy," 2 Pet. i. 19. a light to guide the soul into the way of peace, Psa. cxix. 105—130. Conscience admonishes and accuses, Rom. ii. 15. Oftentimes, with a voice too powerful to be altogether resisted, it whispers, "Take heed to thy soul," Acts xxiv. 25. Providences are arranged by infinite wisdom in such manner, that they may speak a warning voice, Luke xiii. 4. Mark xii. 37. Afflictions are sent to awaken a concern for eternity, Isa. xxxviii. 1. And the Holy Spirit strives, yea, condescends to invite to a conference, with the promise of a happy result. Gen. vi. 3. Isa. i. 18. Acts iii. 19. Destruction has no covering, that we may not fall into the pit, Luke xvi. 23. and heaven darts its splendours from afar to attract the notice of immortal souls. Psa. xvi. 11. Rev. xxi. 23—27. Then neglect not to use those means which are placed within your power. Wait on God continually, Isa. xl. 31. Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day, Isa. lviii. 13, 14. Search the scriptures daily, Acts xvii. 11, 12. Be earnest in prayer. Cry mightily unto God, to enlighten your mind, and renew a right spirit within you, Luke xi. 9—13. Plead the promises of

God, and you will find them faithful and true for the welfare of your souls, Isa. lxv. 24.

Upon the whole, therefore, observe—Those who neglect the means of grace deprive their souls of good, Heb. iv. 1, 2. Those who do not reverence the Son of God and trust in him, lose their souls for ever John viii. 24. In this there is great folly, as well as guilt. He who is more anxious about time than eternity, and disregards spiritual things, is more foolish and cruel than the man, who, when his house is on fire, looks after trifles, and exposes himself, or leaves his child to perish in the flames.

Will you postpone the consideration of these things? What and if this night your souls should be required of you? Be ye therefore ready, Luke xii. 20—40. "Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 2. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 6. lest you resemble the Roman emperor who, in his dying moments, said, "My poor vagrant soul, whither art thou going;" or the unbelieving Voltaire, who declared to his physician, he would give half his fortune to have his life lengthened half a-year; or the Jewish rabbi, who said to them that asked him why he wept, "If they were carrying me before a king of flesh and blood, who is here to-day, and to-morrow in the grave; who may bring me into bondage, but cannot keep me there, only for a season; who may destroy my body, but cannot touch my soul, even in these circumstances I should weep. But now I am going before the King of kings, the only blessed God, who liveth and endureth for ever and ever; who, if I die impenitent, will consign me to the pit whence there is no redemption."

Instead of being thus left, with pagans, infidels, and Jews, to dread uncertainty, on a subject so amazingly important as the future state of the immortal soul; instead of the dreadful risk which all must run who

are careless or indifferent on such a matter, you may, by that grace of the Holy Spirit which you are encouraged to seek, by that repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, which you are invited to exercise, and which is the gift of God, be enabled to triumph over death, and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him," 2 Tim. i. 12. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv. 55. You may carry your imagination beyond the grave, and say, in the prospect of an appearance at the judgment of the great day "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," Rom. viii. 34. You may look forward to eternity, and say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

That God of his infinite mercy and love may bless you with this grace, and lead you to the exercise of this repentance and faith; or, if you are now penitent believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may be kept "stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," is the hearty desire of the friend who thus wishes to draw your attention to the worth of your souls, by leading you to consider their nature, the price of their redemption, and the means of their spiritual welfare.

What were thy gain, couldst thou survey,
The spacious land, and boundless sea,
And view a land at thy control,
But lose thyself, th' immortal soul?

Blessings of mind, or better health,
Can well supply the loss of wealth;
A ruin'd soul what can restore?
That loss can be repair'd no more.

Where will the trembling sinner find
A ransom for the guilty mind?
What jewel of uncounted cost
Can purchase back *that jewel* lost?

What madness thus to throw away
A soul for trifles, day by day!
For dear-bought joys yourself undo,
And barter bliss for certain woe!

Amazing folly! Lord we own
Our guilt, with penitential moan.
While our vain hearts have been engross'd,
With meaner cares, our souls were lost.

For what in nature's spacious range
Would happy saints their bliss exchange?
Or what in time can sinners gain
To balance everlasting pain?

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GOOD NEWS.

SUPPOSE a messenger from the king were to enter one of our public prisons, and, in his majesty's name, offer pardon to every criminal confined there, how would his message be received? Would not every prisoner, with the utmost joy, embrace such a gracious offer, and think every minute tedious till his chains were broken off and he was set at liberty? Or suppose a spendthrift, who had wasted his money in riotous living, and contracted many debts which he was utterly unable to pay, should hear that some great benefactor, on whom he had no claim whatever, had altogether unexpectedly discharged his debts, would he not welcome the good news with the deepest gratitude? Such, reader, are the glad tidings, and infinitely more gracious, which I would bring you this day. I would tell you the good news, that the King of kings offers you a free and full pardon of all your sins; and though you be tied and fettered with the chain of your iniquities, he proclaims to you in his word, "liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," Isa. lxi. 1.

I would affectionately address you as a sinner, who has contracted a most heavy debt to Divine justice by numerous transgressions. I would address you as one who is deserving of everlasting punishment, and actually lies under sentence of condemnation, and then tell you the good news that there is One who from love to your soul has paid your debt, redeemed you by his blood, and opened a way for you to the Divine mercy and favour. "God so loved," to such an astonishing degree loved, "the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but should have everlasting life." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," John iii. 16. 1 Tim. i. 15.

To you, my friend, are the good news of a free salvation sent this day. It is offered you "without money and without

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price." What could possibly suit the case of a helpless sinner so well as this? Had the Lord offered you salvation on condition of perfect obedience, you might indeed plead your utter inability, as a corrupt and fallen being, to obey his pure and holy law. But, blessed be God, this is not the case.

The good news of salvation, not the terrors of the law, are set before you in the gospel. God sends down his only dear Son from heaven to die in your stead, and pay the penalty due to your sins. Jesus voluntarily performs his part in the covenant, in infinite love to man; leaves the throne of his glory, and, though in himself the mighty God, though Lord of heaven and earth by whom are all things, makes himself of no reputation, takes upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, humbles himself and becomes obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, suffering the "just for the unjust" to bring you to God.

The glorious message, then, of the gospel to you is, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Believe, and live for ever. Accept of Christ as your only Saviour. Come just as you are to his cross. Do not look for any fitness in yourself; do not wait till you think you have some claim upon his love; this would be to wait for ever, and yet to wait in vain. A sinner cannot have any fitness of his own; the Saviour's invitation is his warrant. The returning prodigal is sure to find a gracious welcome. The Saviour's own words are, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." And again, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," Matt. xi. 28. John vi. 37. Isa. xlv. 22.

Is not then, my friend, the freeness of the gospel salvation good news indeed? Does it not gladden your heart to hear of Him who hath died to redeem you from the curse of the law, being made a curse for you? Do not say, "This would be good news if I was worthy of such a salvation, but my sins are so numerous, my guilt is so aggravated, my character is so vile, that I can never hope the Saviour will receive me." It is written for your encouragement, "God commendeth his love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

And again, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," Rom. v. 6. 8. 1 John i. 7. Rejoice then in the good news of the gospel. Come to Jesus without delay. He is just such a Saviour as you need. Are you ignorant? He will be made unto you wisdom. Are you guilty, and without any thing to plead on your behalf before him? He will be made unto you righteousness. Are you unholy and defiled with sin? He will be made unto you sanctification. Are you lost, and totally unable to pay the price of your ransom? Are you a captive to sin and Satan, and not able to deliver yourself? He will be made unto you redemption. In the Lord Jesus Christ is treasured up an infinite fulness of all you can ever want or wish. He is strength to the weak, consolation to the afflicted, medicine for the sick, feet to the lame, eyes to the blind; in one word he is Jesus, that is, a Saviour, and is emphatically so called because he saves his people from their sins.

But you will, perhaps, ask, How am I to avail myself of this gracious salvation? You have, indeed, proclaimed good news, but how shall I enjoy the blessings you tell me of, and make them mine? I answer, Simply by believing the message. Take God at his word. Cast yourself wholly upon Christ as a lost sinner for salvation, and receive him in the characters in which he is set forth in the scriptures. Sensible of your own ignorance and blindness as to spiritual things, take him as your Prophet to teach you; feeling your own exceeding unworthiness, look to him as a Priest to atone for your iniquities; and knowing that you have in time past yielded yourself a servant to sin and Satan, beg of the Lord Jesus Christ to rule as a King over, and in your soul, and make you his willing, loyal, and faithful subject. Do not suppose the rich and free mercies of the gospel are too good news to be true, or think, like Naaman of old, the remedy too simple and easy, and seek to do some great work to find acceptance with God. But praise the Lord that his own word declares that to him that worketh not, that is, by way of earning heaven, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Is Christ set forth in the word of God as the way, the way of access to the Father, and the way to final blessedness in heaven? then do you thankfully by faith enter upon that way, and walk in it. Does he call himself "the door" into the kingdom, and promise that if any man enter

by him he shall be saved? Then immediately by faith enter in at this open door. Is he the "bread of life?" Let your soul by faith feed on him to its growth and nourishment? Is he also the "water of life?" See that you do by faith drink water from this well of salvation.

Have you then hitherto trusted to yourself, and to your own works, either in whole, or in part, for salvation? And are you, in consequence, a stranger to peace with God, to a sense of reconciliation with him, and to the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost? If so, I pray you from the bottom of your heart to bless God that you have this day heard the good news of a free and finished salvation. Cease "to hew out to yourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water," and go to the "Fountain of living waters," Jer. ii. 13. Joyfully and thankfully look to the blood of Christ to wash away your sin, to the righteousness of Christ as your title to heaven, and to the grace of Christ to subdue and mortify the power of indwelling sin.

Turn not, I beseech you, a deaf ear to the good news of the gospel. Now is your accepted time; now is your day of salvation. Now are offered to you, freely offered, pardon, peace, holiness, and heaven. To-morrow your soul may be where hope never enters, and the sound of mercy is not heard. See that you refuse not Him that speaketh. Shall God the Father in infinite love give his only begotten Son to die for you; shall Jesus, in boundless pity, shed his precious blood for your sake; shall the Spirit be sent down from heaven to convince you of sin, and lead you to Christ; and shall this perfect salvation, this free redemption, be set before you, and will you slight and reject it? God forbid. Rather may you devoutly say, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord," Psa. cxvi. 12, 13.

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THE FULNESS OF CHRIST.

WHEN we trust in frames and feelings, as soon as they are gone, the soul is discouraged and dejected; but when we trust in God's promises, which are always the same, then it is we are right; and a sense of God's unchangeable love toward us, proceeding from such trust, fires our souls with a continual love towards him.

Christ is our law-fulfilling righteousness, and our sin-atoning Saviour.

God keep us in our right place; even in an humble, constant dependence on Christ Jesus.

There is life in Christ Jesus to quicken you in your most dead and uncomfortable frame.

Concerning his state by nature, the believer confesses, "I had as much evil within me as I could hold, and when opportunity came, it drew it out into action."

That the thoughts of a natural man are only evil, see Gen. vi. 5. That his words are such, see James iii. 6. 8. That his works are such, see Psalm xiv. 3. And that his thoughts, words, and works are such, see Rom. iii. 9, etc.

The man whose eyes are enlightened, and to whom it is given to see the depravity of human nature, confesses, "The more I converse with mankind, the more I perceive the Scriptures to be true, and that man is not a bit better than the word of God represents him to be."

The more spiritual a man is, the more dependence will he have on Christ.

Perhaps, you are ready to say, "I am afraid I am not a child of God, because I am so dull and lifeless, my prayers are so cold and dead, and I am so heavy and careless under ordinances." This is the method God takes to make you discontented with yourself, your duties, and performances, and to make you look at Christ as your all.

When the children of Israel were bit by the fiery serpents, they were to look simply at what God had commanded—

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at the brazen serpent; so must we who are bit by the old serpent, the devil, look simply to Christ.

Come to the blood of Jesus to have sin pardoned, and then come to the arm of Jesus to have it subdued.

Do not be afraid to part with any thing for Christ; it is unbelief that persuades you there is more pleasure, satisfaction, or happiness in any thing than in him.

When God sends an adverse dispensation to the believer, it is with this message, "Go, draw that sinner from the love of the world; go, take away that comfort, he is going to make an idol of it."

We do not obey, that God may love us, but because he has loved us—our obedience is all gratitude.

There are none truly humbled but those who have a sense of God's mercy in Christ Jesus.

We have high thoughts of self, therefore low thoughts of Christ.

The word of God humbles the sinner, and comforts the humbled soul.

They who are living comfortably and happily on Christ, feel the want of him every day; and if they have more grace, they feel the want of him more.

The more you trust in Christ, the more you will experience the sweetness of a happy, growing communion with him.

In proportion as we know ourselves we love Christ.

If Christ is precious to you, you have saving faith, for he is precious to those who believe.

As sure as the sorrows of the righteous shall be turned to joy, the joys of the wicked shall be turned to sorrow.

It is poor hearing, and poor reading, unless you mix faith and prayer with what you hear and what you read.

A moral action, when done with a Christian spirit, is changed into a heavenly grace.

Christ has more love for his people than heart can conceive, and more blessings than hands can receive.

It is for want of looking to Jesus more, under afflictions, that we want patience and resignation.

A sinner never gives more glory to God than when he trusts all to Christ.

Do not hearken to what your heart says about Christ, much less to what unbelief and the deceiver of the brethren say; but look at what the Father says of him

Carry your good things to Christ, he will keep them; carry your bad things, he will cure them; whatever your frame is, let nothing separate you from your Beloved.

They who know Him find that they never knew happiness until they possessed him.

Whatever you mourn over, oh mourn over your hard heart of unbelief! carry it to the blood of sprinkling: nothing but faith in Christ can soften it.

There is no man has a thankful heart, but he has a joyful heart also; thankfulness and joy always go together.

A man who is in Christ may smile at all the world's evils.

The more fellowship with Christ, the more dead to sin.

Saint Paul found in Christ and him crucified, all that was worth having.

Christ is not a winter sun, which only gives light; but he is like a spring sun—he warms and cultivates the heart, and makes the fruits spring forth.

Though it is very hard to deny ourselves, yet every thing is possible to God, and so faith finds it; the same power that crucified you to the world will crucify the world in you.

When Christ rises upon the soul, all vain things fade away; there are as many stars in the day as in the night, but the sun puts them all out of sight.

The more you walk with Christ, the more peace you will have, and the more you will see you have obtained mercy of God.

Though death looks dark to nature, yet faith will brighten the prospect.

No man who has come to Christ Jesus hates the law, but loves whatsoever it commands.

The more spiritual a man is, the more he discovers the workings of sin.

There is in man not only an ignorance of God, and the things of God, but a continual turning from him.

Sprinkle the conscience afresh every day with the blood of Christ; this will not only deliver you from the guilt of sin, but it will also deliver you from the love of sin.

This is the greatest sin of all, that we will not take the remedy God holds forth.

In daily conversation with poor sinners, who are writing

bitter things against themselves, send them to the word of God, and the work of Christ.

When we look at troubles, we are apt to be terrified, but we do not know how big they are with blessings

There never could have been a way to the Father, if Christ Jesus had not taken flesh and become the way.

Generally, when there is something outward very distressing, or something inward very trying, God affords his comfort to his people; they then want them most.

When God puts faith into the fire, it is not to consume it, but to prove it and improve it.

A cross is your portion, if a crown be your reward.

Where Christ is, no cross can hurt; but improvement and blessedness cleave to the cross, where the person under the cross cleaves to the Lord.

Oh what are all our sufferings, when the glory to be revealed is put into the opposite scale!

The more a believer grows out of himself, he grows into Christ; the more he hates himself, he loves Christ; and the more he distrusts himself, he trusts Christ; as one scale rises, the other falls.

The more the believer lives on Christ, the more is God glorified.

—"No," say you, "I do not want to go to hell,"—but you go the way to it, if you reject Christ.

The real Christian hides all his graces under a cover; he throws a vail over them, and but rarely reveals them; and when he does, he prays that God would keep him humble, and that it may be to his glory.

The gospel does not say a hard word to any one coming to Christ; it speaks only encouragement to such.

Many can witness that Christ never took away an outward blessing [from his people] but he gave a spiritual one instead of it.

The love of Christ is the most constraining obligation in the world; oh what can it influence a man to do!

It is the glory of the gospel, that it is free.

If you have come to Christ, your heart hates sin.

There is no way to get the conscience at peace, there is no way to get the heart sanctified, there is no way to get over the least sin, but as we go to Jesus.

Christ, by his Spirit, is crucifying us daily to this body of sin, that we may be the readier to part with it.

If you are not living dependent on Christ Jesus, there is not a sin into which any one can fall, but you may fall into it.

Whatever Christ has commanded his people to do, he has promised them grace to enable them to do.

The more the gospel is believed, the more God appears lovely, and sin hateful.

You will never love God until you see him in Christ reconciled to you.

"What makes one Christian greater than another?" Why, because he is humbled more in his own eyes, and strives to glorify his God more, and so he has more grace, for God giveth more grace to the lowly.

The more faith in God, the more love to him; and the more you love God, the more you will desire to be like him.

Notwithstanding God chastises the believer, there is nothing but the tenderest mercy and infinite love in his heart towards him.

Believers are grafted on Christ, and as they depend on the stock on which they are grafted, they become fruitful branches.

Never take up the Bible without a short prayer.

The believer attends ordinances, that he may know more of Christ, receive more from him, and depend more upon him.

The day you depend most on Christ is the happiest day in your life.

Here is a Christian who can get something for prayer and praise out of every thing.

Our life here is a warfare, and our great enemy is SELF.

The believer is made sensible that he is a wretched, ruined sinner, and so he liv upon grace every moment.

Do you grow in grace?—then you will think less and less of yourself.

"What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" and if you are but a receiver, what have you to boast of, but the bounty of the bestower?

People are continually complaining of something in themselves! why, every thing you find in yourself should send you to Christ.

When the spiritual life is begun, it is a life like its Author, it never ends

"My life, and all I have from Adam, is subject to death. I want a life that death cannot touch."—It is in Christ.

Christ Jesus turns all things into blessings; he turns temporal blessings into spiritual blessings and temporal miseries into spiritual blessings too.

The word of God is not preached to be heard only, but preached to be believed.

"What have I to look at that my life may be holy, my heart happy, and my conscience at peace?" At the fulness of Him in whom all fulness dwells.

God gave his Son—for what? That the believer "should not perish" for his sins, but that he should "have everlasting life" for Christ's righteousness.

Faith in Christ's righteousness is a cordial indeed in a dying hour.

There is nothing God has promised in the Bible, but it is all yours in Christ.

Seek the growth, of faith and seek it in God's way, pray over the Scriptures, hear them, read them, meditate on them.

There is no sin like unbelief; all the poison of all the sins in the world is in it.

"Trusting to the blood of Jesus," says the believer, "I am satisfied I shall never perish; trusting to the righteousness of Jesus, I am satisfied I shall have everlasting life."

Every gift thy people have, every grace they receive, and the blessings on their labour, are all from thy bounty.

"I'll keep my sin, and I'll be bound over to death, and be bound over to hell." One would think no man in his senses would talk so; but such is the language of sinners.

It is not hearing only, but a dependence on Jesus in hearing, that brings the blessing.

We are by nature in such a state that we will neither ask Christ's help, nor take his help.

The reasons why Christians walk in darkness, and stumble and fall, is, because they do not abide by what God, by his Spirit, speaks in his word.

By disuse of faith we set spiritual things at a distance, so that we rather look at them than enjoy them.

The reason why our graces are not more bright is, because we are not constantly using them; that is the reason they grow so rusty.

Christ enlightens, enlivens, strengthens, sanctifies; and that is the way he brings his people to heaven.

All the believer's troubles and trials preach to him and say, "None can do you good but Christ;" temptations say, "You have temptations, go to Christ to get them conquered;" troubles say, "You have troubles, go to Christ, and he will turn them into blessings."

Our Saviour says, that the Holy Spirit shall "bring all things to your remembrance;" you may remember them as rational creatures, but you cannot remember them practically without the Spirit.

That person who lives most on Christ, is most prepared to meet death whenever it comes.

"I am the Lord thy God"—as soon as you know that, you will love the ten commandments—not before.

The legalist's obedience is, that he may be saved; but the believer's is, because he is saved.

You and I are not merely to look at Christ and admire him, but to take him and enjoy him.

We would not speak a word against comforts; they are very well when they are founded on God's word, but when they are not, they are nothing but enthusiasm

O sirs! whatever you do, take care you do not rest on any thing but God's word, and that will bring true comforts, solid comforts, holy comforts, lasting comforts, everlasting comforts.

The more you know of Christ, the more you will love him, and the more you will loathe yourselves.

Complain of your weakness, but do not let it make you forbear leaning on Jesus; if you do, you will fall.

Trust Christ much, and you will have much to praise him for.

There is not one thing fearful and dreadful, but it is hanging over your head, if you have not come to Christ.

Christ has the same love in his heart now, as he had when he was nailed to the cross; he has not changed his heart; though he has changed his state and changed his place, yet his heart is still the same.

There is no one will ever overcome a sin, but by this method; to see that the Lamb of God has taken away the guilt of sin, and then to look at his almighty arm to subdue and crucify it.

The believer is studying every day to be more dead to

what his dear Saviour hates, and more alive to what his dear Saviour loves.

It is by faith that all the blessings of Christ's suretyship come: the Lord increase that blessed grace in our hearts —the Lord increases it by means, by hearing, reading, meditating on, and praying over his word.

Sin took away our righteousness, and made us sinners; sin took away life, and brought in death; sin took away the blessing of God, and brought the curse of God.

The debt was demanded—Christ paid it; satisfaction was demanded—Christ made it.

Righteousness; holiness; perseverance; victory over sin, death, and hell; and life eternal: all these are the blessings freely held forth to poor sinners in Christ.

If your sins and miseries preach aright, they will always lead you upwards!

Spiritual life, spiritual comfort, spiritual victory, are the effect of the faith that rests on the word of God, that trusts God's testimony respecting his Son; placed any where else, it is a bubble, and nothing but enthusiasm and madness come from the delusion.

The longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it, it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ.

The more you read the Bible, study it, and pray over it, the more you will take heed to it, "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

If a man takes the Bible, and shuts Christ out of it, it is a dark book, it is Egyptian darkness indeed.

Oh it is a great blessing to be made teachable, and to be kept teachable!

The word of God in the hand of the Spirit, is the means of enlightening and enlivening sinners.

There is nothing but darkness and deadness without Christ.

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DO YOU BELIEVE IT?

WE read in the book of Genesis of two awful deluges. The one was a deluge of sin; the other a deluge of water. These two were closely connected together; the deluge of sin was the cause of the deluge of water.

The account given of the wickedness of men at that period, is a very distressing one. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart," Gen. vi. 5, 6. After having long borne with them, God at length resolved that he would destroy all flesh from the face of the whole earth. This purpose he made known to Noah, who was a just and holy man, and who had found grace in his sight, and he commanded him to build an ark in which he and his family were to find safety when the threatened vengeance should be fulfilled. During the time that the ark was being prepared, Noah warned all around him of what was at hand. He is called a "preacher of righteousness;" and he faithfully exhorted them to forsake their sins, and to flee from the wrath that was coming. But they did not believe a word that he said; they regarded his message with neglect or contempt; and called him, doubtless, a fanatic and a madman, in entertaining, what they thought, such foolish fancies. Those are striking words in Matt. xxiv. 38, 39, where it is said, "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." It is here said that they knew not. But how could that be? Had not Noah warned

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them of it again and again for the long space of one hundred and twenty years? The meaning is, that they believed not. Had they believed what Noah said to them, every principle of common sense, and of common prudence would have induced them to seek to be delivered from so dreadful a doom. But they did not believe a word that he said until the flood came, and then they were forced to believe it all.

Reader, have you not been often warned as were the inhabitants of the old world? Does not the word of God lift up its warning voice to you? But the question now proposed to you is, What reception has God's message received? Do you regard it? do you believe it? It is said in the word of God that there is a deluge of wrath coming; a deluge ten thousand times more terrific than that which came in the days of Noah: but the question is, Do you believe it? It is there said, that upon the wicked God will "rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest," as the awful portion of their cup, Psa. xi. 6; but do you believe it? "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" will be "upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile," Rom. ii. 8, 9; but do you believe it? "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 7—9; but do you believe it? This is what the word of God proclaims; but do you believe it? You are ready perhaps to reply that you do. I am no infidel, is your language; I have always regarded the Bible as the word of God. O reader, many pretend to regard the Bible as the word of God, who live in the practical disbelief of it after all. Did you really believe what God says in his word, could you rest, think you, in your present state? could you go on from day to day, and from

year to year in your present carelessness and unconcern? Oh does not the indifference you manifest in reference to your immortal soul, and to the solemn realities of eternity, afford sad evidence that you do not believe the solemn declarations of God's word.

That such is the case, may be clearly confirmed by a simple illustration. Suppose a neighbour were to knock at your door after you had gone to bed, and cry out that your house was on fire. If you believed what he said, would you not be up in an instant, and be all life, and concern, and activity in order to prevent, if possible, your house and what it contained from being consumed? But what if you continued to lie, easy and unconcerned, would not that be as plain a proof as could be, that you did not believe your neighbour? that you regarded him as giving an alarm that was unfounded? The application is easy. Oh did you believe, really believe what God says in his word concerning your present state, and your future prospects, would you, could you continue careless and indifferent as you now are? Would you not at once be filled with the greatest anxiety about escaping from the danger to which you are exposed; and the language of your inmost heart and soul would be, "Men and brethren, what shall I do?" While, on the other hand, if you have no such anxiety, be assured, whatever your pretensions might be, that you disbelieve God, and so make him a liar.

Oh repent then, and believe the gospel. It is the gospel of God. It contains only the true sayings of God, and therefore they are sure to be fulfilled. All its threatenings will be fulfilled, and all its promises and invitations will be fulfilled too. Is it not written, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. Is it not written, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he

will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 6, 7. Is it not written, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isa. i. 18. Is it not written, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezek. xxxiii. 11. O reader, believe these blessed announcements; for they are all true. It is God himself that speaks; and let God be true, though all men were liars. He "is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Numb. xxiii. 19. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," Matt. xxiv. 35. Have faith then in God, in the word of God, and in the Son of God. Cry with him of old, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief," Mark ix. 24.

And beware of delay in a matter so momentous. The inhabitants of the old world believed, but not till it was too late. The door of the ark was shut, shut by God himself, and all cries for admission were in vain. Oh then believe now. Apply to the Saviour now. Fall on your bended knees at his gracious footstool, now. Cry, Lord save me, or I perish, now; say not, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." That convenient season may never never, never come. "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2.

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"WHAT HAVE I DONE?"

JEREMIAH viii. 6.

WE came into this world, not as mere animals, to eat and sleep, to grow and decay, and then to pass away for ever. We are rational creatures, endowed with an understanding, a will, and various affections; and we have within us a monitor possessed of mighty influence, and which will sooner or later be attended to—conscience. We are immortal creatures: whenever we die and depart hence, our souls will exist in a state of separation from the body until the resurrection of the dead; and then our bodies will be again united to our souls, and become immortal. We are also accountable creatures, and must "appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10. Such being our case, reflection must be one of our most necessary and important duties. It is indeed neglected and shunned by many: they do not relish it: they feel conscious that many things in their temper and conduct, will not bear serious reflection. But from this neglect, great mischief and danger arise. Whilst on the other hand, the greatest advantage will assuredly result from a due attention to the important business of self reflection; if we ask ourselves "What have I done?" determined to have the question faithfully answered.

Reader, many helps are offered you. God's holy word is a guide and a glass, which will lead you within, and hold up a mirror in which you may see yourself. The instructions of a gospel ministry if attended upon, will also assist your progress in this work. The dispensations of Divine providence towards you: the mercies you have enjoyed, and the trials you have endured, are so many materials for reflection. Conscience is implanted within you to give its powerful aid. And yet further, Divine assistance is promised to those who desire it; and you will do wisely to lift up your heart in prayer to God, for the Holy Spirit to assist you to "consider your ways," Hag. i. 5.

You must be brought to serious reflection at one period

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or another. It may be put off for a time, but cannot be so for ever. If it is not attended to now, it must be attended to in some moments when you are alone; if not then, when you are laid upon the bed of affliction; if not then, in a dying hour; if not then, in a state of hopeless and everlasting misery, where reflection will avail you nothing, but will increase your woe.

Do you ask, What are the proper objects of reflection? Reflect upon your thoughts, and the course they have run. And oh! have not many of them been vain and vile, unprofitable and sinful, such as you would not like any fellow-creature to know? Reflect upon the language you have uttered; whether it has been chaste and correct, and such as was calculated to leave useful impressions upon the minds of those with whom you have conversed; or whether it has been profane and polluting, and such as was calculated to occupy the memories and the minds of your associates with what is immoral or erroneous. Reflect upon your general conduct; has it been such as is marked out by the unerring rule of the revealed will of God: has it been characterized by "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report," Phil. iv. 8; or have you lived in habits of sinful indulgence, injurious to yourself, and mischievous in their influence upon those around you? Reflect, too, upon particular actions: have they been suitable and seasonable, commendable or censurable, useful or useless, pleasing or displeasing to God? Reflect especially upon the measure of attention you have paid to your soul's eternal welfare: has this been your chief concern, and have you sought above all things, to share in that salvation which the gospel of Christ unfolds, and of which it assures every sinner who believes it? Or have you lived until now as if you had no immortal soul, which must exist in a state of perfect blessedness or perfect misery for ever, according as it is attended to or neglected during this short and uncertain life, and as if the body and its comfort and gratification were all that is worthy of yourregard? Reflect—"I have rational powers, I have advantages for acquiring knowledge, I dwell in a land where the Bible is within the reach of all, where the sabbath reminds me of a God to be worshipped, and of a rest from worldly labour and care, to be enjoyed and improved for my spiritual benefit, where there is a faithful ministry on which I may attend so

as to become wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus; where there are to be found many real Christians, the salt of the earth, the lights of the world, men of prayer, who walk with God, who exemplify the spirit of the gospel of Christ in their tempers and their lives, and who imitate their Divine Lord by going about doing good:—how have all these affected and influenced me? Have I duly thought upon the responsibility which they lay upon me: and am I, or am I not correctly acquainted with myself as a fallen creature depraved and guilty, and with the way of salvation which is so plainly unfolded in the gospel, and so fully evidenced to be of Divine origin? Am I suitably impressed with my situation as a probationer for eternity. Am I an unbeliever, or am I "sound in the faith?" Am I walking in the broad road which leadeth to destruction, or in the narrow way to life eternal? Oh, inquire whether you have felt yourself under just condemnation for your breaking God's holy law, whether you know what it is to mourn over the sins of your heart and life in the dust of abasement before God, and in the exercise of unfeigned repentance; whether you have fled for refuge to Christ the only Saviour from the wrath to come; and whether you are sincerely and earnestly desirous of experiencing the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, that you may be a partaker of that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14.

Remember, the question "What have I done?" must be answered by each for himself: no other person can answer it for us. In this matter each must bear his own burden. It is a concern which lies between God and our own souls; and in which no other party, even the dearest friend, can interpose for our benefit.

What a history would the record of the inward workings of the heart, and the outward actings of very many persons be, were it faithfully written out and read! What scenes would be unfolded if the question "What have I done?" were fully answered! Of how many would it manifestly appear that they have lived to no good purpose all their days: they have done nothing—absolutely nothing as regards attending to the most important of all affairs, the salvation of their never-dying souls, and a preparation for that eternal state on which they are soon to enter. And of many, too, it would be equally evident that they have only lived to

increase the number of their offences against God, and thereby to treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds, Rom. ii. 5, 6, and perhaps adding to their guilt by the evil influence which they have exerted over others, and who therefore are under a double condemnation!

Reader, if you have never made a solemn pause until the hour in which this paper falls into your hand, pause now; and as in the heart-searching presence of the all-seeing God, ask the question with the greatest seriousness and sincerity, "What have I done?" O suffer not business, or cares, or pleasure, or anything else to divert your attention from an inquiry of such vast importance. Remember, there can be no real return to God, until you yield yourself up to solemn reflection; and no solid comfort, no blessed hope, until by self-reflection you are led to deep abasement before God, and to an earnest application to that gracious Redeemer whose blood cleanseth from all sin, whose righteousness justifieth the ungodly who believe, and whose Spirit alone can purify the heart and fill it with peace and joy. If such should be the course you take, you will have cause to be thankful to God, that you have been directed and disposed to put home to your heart the important question, "What have I done?"

What have I done for Him that died
To save my wretched soul?
How are my follies multiplied
Fast as my minutes roll!

Lord, with this guilty heart of mine,
To thy dear cross I flee;
And to thy grace my soul resign,
To be renew'd by thee.

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THINGS TO BE DONE.

MAN is a rational creature; he is an accountable creature: that is, he is made to differ from the brutes that perish, by having power to think as well as act, and for the use or abuse of his powers he must one day give an account to God. To those who under a sense of sin look to the atonement of Christ for pardon, to his merits for their acceptance with God, and to the Holy Spirit for Divine assistance to produce in them a habitual obedience to the will of God, He will finally give eternal happiness. On those who do not perform his will, but neglect his commands, and trifle with their souls and eternal realities, loving the sins and vanities of this world, God will pour out his eternal displeasure, as he has declared in his word. The question then is, What has God appointed to be done that we may escape his wrath, and obtain his favour?

I. The soul must be saved.

When God created man, he made him both soul and body: the soul is that part of his being that thinks, feels, fears, and is capable of loving and serving God. It was made pure, holy, upright; but by sin has fallen and become debased; it is also exposed to the eternal wrath of an offended God. But God, who is rich in mercy, and who so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son for man's redemption, does not wish the death of the sinner; therefore though man is fallen, and deserves the wrath of God, he has provided a Saviour, and a great one, for the deliverance of all who put their trust in him. If the salvation of the soul is desired (and surely it should be your first wish) you must flee to the Saviour in the exercise of repentance and faith, casting your precious soul into his hands, and relying simply and entirely on his all-sufficient merits; "for there is none other name under

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heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts iv. 12; there is no other way to God; and those who thus come, he will in no wise cast out.

II. Sin and sinful companions must be given up.

Jesus Christ said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Matt. vi. 24—cannot serve him and a sinful world. Such is the depravity of the human heart, that man naturally loves sin, and he is attached to those who, like himself, love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil, John iii. 19. But God calls upon you to come out from a sinful world and be separate, to give up sin though it be dear as a right hand or eye, because the friendship of the world is enmity with God, 2 Cor. vi. 17; Matt. v. 29, 30; Jas. iv. 4. Will you, for the pleasures of a moment, expose yourself to eternal torment? Will you, to please sinful companions, shut yourself out of heaven, and shut yourself up with those who will for ever blaspheme God in the fire of hell? Would not this be great folly? Oh then break off from sin and wicked men, and walk in the way of holiness, and in company with the godly, "the excellent of the earth," so shall you be blessed indeed.

III. God must be glorified.

Our gracious Maker gave us our powers of body and mind to be used for his praise. We are not our own, we belong to him who formed us; therefore when we devote our time, property, and talents, to our own use only, we rob God, and must give an account to him at last for so doing. Consider what talents you possess that you may use them for God. The angels do his will, hearkening to the voice of his word, Psa. ciii. 20. The sun, moon, and stars pursue the course that God has set them; the seasons, the wind, the rain, perform his pleasure, and you ought to live to the glory of God. Remember that he gave you life, he gives you health, food, friends; your all comes from him, and it is the basest ingratitude not to serve him in return. If you

live only for yourself, and the service of Satan and sin, your portion will be with the enemies of God in another world. Oh then henceforth serve the Lord.

IV. The sabbath day must be kept holy.

From the beginning God has claimed one day in seven to be specially devoted to his service, and while the duty of man is thus made plain, his interest and happiness have been graciously consulted. No man can be really happy who lives in opposition to the will and command of God; for his ways are pleasantness, and his paths are peace, while the way of transgressors is hard, and "there is no peace to the wicked," Isa. lvii. 21. Have you hitherto devoted the sabbath to pleasure, to work, to profit, to company, to idleness, and not to the service of God, and the welfare of your soul? Ah! this will not do. Do you wish to enjoy the favour of God in life? to feel happy in a dying hour? to find acceptance at the day of judgment? Then you must seek to walk with Him in his own appointed way; you must keep holy the sabbath day, you must attend the house of prayer, and listen seriously to the faithfully preached gospel.

V. The Holy Bible must be read.

Alas! how sadly is this blessed book neglected by many! and yet a kind and gracious God has given it to us to be our guide to heaven. It is true there are many things in it hard to be understood, but every truth that is needed to do our souls good is so plain, that the wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein, Isa. xxxv. 8. Make the Bible your daily companion, go to it for advice in every thing, especially to inquire how your sins may be pardoned, and your soul be saved. Hear what Jesus says, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," John v. 39. There is no other book that can give such complete counsel, for it came from God himself: search it daily, and you shall not miss your way; follow its directions.

and you shall have peace. It points the way to heaven, and leads in safety there.

VI. Prayer must be offered to God.

It is the express command of God that we should call upon his name, nor can it be well with any who neglect this duty. Man is a dependent creature, and God alone can bestow the several blessings which he needs: how great then the folly of not looking up to him daily for the mercies we require! Jesus Christ tells us to enter our closet, or secret place, and pray to our Father in heaven, Matt. vi. 6. Prayer should be sincere, fervent, offered to God in the name of Jesus Christ, and it should be for the following things:—for the pardon of sins, for the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the guidance of Providence, for the spiritual welfare of your own souls and the souls of others, and for the spread of God's word of truth throughout the world. Oh! think how happy he is who lives daily in communion with God, and who is always guided by him. This may be your lot also, if you live near to God in earnest fervent prayer.

Thus have you been told of a few things to be done, and which must be done, if you would go through life with comfortable hopes of a happy end. Remember that God has placed you here a little while to prepare for another world: you know not how short the time may be; but he has given you opportunities of improving it, so that you need not perish. He has given you the sabbath, the Bible, the house of prayer, the throne of grace, and promised you the Holy Spirit if you ask him, Luke xi. 13. So that if you come short of heaven, you must bear the blame for ever. Oh! then trifle not with your soul, your mercies, but "seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 6.

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THE DIVINE MISSIONARY.

IF, in some remote age of the world, man—rebellious man—had been informed that God was about to give a revelation from heaven; that a messenger from the court of the Supreme Governor was about to descend, to carry into effect some secret purpose of his will,—what could have been foreboded but tribulation and wrath upon every soul of man that had sinned?

And such information was given; the revelation was announced; the messenger was appointed: but instead of anger was love; instead of punishment was mercy; instead of destruction came salvation. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved," John iii. 16, 17.

The Son of God, then, was a Missionary.

For a period of four thousand years, his appearance had been expected by mankind; and, as centuries rolled on, successive and clearer intimations were given, in order to identify his character, and explain the object of his mission. To select one of these intimations from among many, it was declared by the prophet Isaiah, speaking in the person of him whom he predicted, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," Isa. lxi. 1, 2.

More than seven hundred years after this prediction had been given, Jesus appeared in the synagogue of Nazareth, and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," Luke iv. 16—21. And from that time, he "went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people," Matt. ix. 35. Let us observe him in his progress.

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He "went about all the cities and villages," and he met with men of wealth. And did his message concern them? Yes. For wealth could not buy what he came freely to bestow. It could not satisfy the cravings of an immortal mind; it could not purchase peace of conscience; it could not remove the fear of death; it could not prepare for eternity. Hence this Divine Missionary charged the wealthy inhabitants of Judea to "take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." He warned them of the deceitfulness of riches, and their tendency to stupify and overwhelm the heart, and he illustrated his instruction by example. He told them of a rich man who, in the midst of his schemes and calculations for amassing and hoarding property, received the awful summons, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So," said the heavenly Teacher, "is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God," Luke xii. 15–21; xxi. 34; Matt. xiii. 22.

"He went about the cities," and there he met with the learned and polite. And could he add to their stores of knowledge? Yes. For without the knowledge of salvation from the wrath to come, all other information could be but of little worth: and he came to be "the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6. Unsanctified and perverted learning becomes a curse; it feeds the pride and vanity of the human heart, and blinds the eyes of the understanding against the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ," Phil. iii. 8; against "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God," 2 Cor. iv. 4.

It was to this tendency of unsanctified learning to blind the eyes and harden the heart, and cause it to reject the humbling yet only method of salvation revealed by God, and available by man, that our Saviour referred, when he once "rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight," Luke x. 21.

It was therefore with peculiar propriety that the heavenly Missionary reiterated to a learned rabbi the solemn declaration, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be

born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.—That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again," John iii.

He "went about the cities and villages," and he come into contact with the merchant and his servants, the husbandman and his labourers, the buyer and the seller. And were they required, amidst the multiplicity of their engagements, to attend to his message? Yes; and he had a message for each, peculiarly adapted to arrest the attention and arouse concern. He told of a merchantman, who, seeking goodly pearls, found one of great price, and went and sold all that he had, in order to purchase it; and this pearl was the kingdom of heaven, Matt. xiii. 45, 46. He spake of the faithful servant, left in charge of his master's property, and who, persevering in diligent attention to his master's interests, was accordingly and proportionably rewarded, Luke xix. And this he spake of the kingdom of God. And each was reminded, that whatever else might be his pursuit or his occupation, one thing was needful; and the inexpressibly momentous appeal was made: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mark viii. 36, 37.

He "went about the cities," and there he met with the lovers of pleasure, in whose feasts were the harp, and the viol, and the tabret, but who regarded not the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hand, Isa. v. 12. And did his mission lay claim to their regard? Yes. For he taught such that the tendency of worldly pleasure is to shut the heart against the superior claims of religion; that they are fleeting in their nature, and unsatisfactory in their character; that though they may amuse for a moment, they soon disappear, and leave their votaries a prey to disappointment. He drew before their eyes the picture of a rich, luxurious man, who, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, thought only of gratifying his appetites, and disregarded alike the claims of piety and benevolence; for he lived forgetful of God his Maker, and he permitted his fellow-creature to lie suffering at his gate, unheeded and unsupplied. And then he changed the scene. "The rich man died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments," and

called in vain for a drop of water to cool his parched tongue, Luke xvi. 19—25. And from such examples Jesus warned the lovers of pleasure to watch and be ready, lest in an hour that they thought not the Son of man should come, Matt. xxiv. 44.

He "went about the cities," and there he met with the Pharisees, who thought themselves to be righteous, and despised others. And had he a message for them? Yes; and it was a terrible one. "Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone," Luke xi. 42. And from their example and practice, he warned those around: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 20.

He "went about the cities," and there he found the abandoned and the lost. And did his commission extend to them? Yes; and it abounded with encouragement. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke xix. 10. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," Matt. ix. 13.

He "went about the cities," and there he found the miserable and the heart-broken. And had he a word in season for them? Yes. This was his gracious invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light," Matt. xi. 28—30.

The Divine Missionary "went about the villages." And whom did he meet there? He met with the poor and the unlearned; but he scorned neither their poverty nor their ignorance, but adapted his instructions to their abilities, and illustrated his precepts by their habits and occupations. The fowls of the air, the lilies of the field, the growth of the corn, and the appearance of the sky, each furnished him with a subject by which to illustrate the dealings of God's providence and grace, and by which to delineate human character, Matt. vi. 26. 28—30; xiii. 3, etc.; Mark iv. 26—29. The fallow ground, the harvest field, the vineyard, and the sheepfold, each formed a medium through which to convey lessons of eternal truth to the humblest peasant.

He taught the listening husbandman, that as the fallow ground must be broken up before the seed is cast in, so must the human heart be broken up by repentance for sin, before it can receive the consolations of the gospel; that worldly cares and pleasures, like thorns and stones in the field, choking the seed, render instruction fruitless; that as every seed produces of its own kind, which passes through its several stages, arrives at maturity, and is then dealt with according to its value, so human character is continually forming, and, when matured, will be gathered in, like the produce of the field, and separated, the precious from the vile, as the wheat is from the tares or the chaff, Matt. xiii.

He seems to have been near a sheepfold when he declared himself "the good Shepherd" of souls, who gave his life for their rescue, and would preserve them with infinitely more than a shepherd's watchfulness, fidelity, ability, and care, John x. He was probably in sight of the vineyard when he proclaimed that he was the true Vine, and that his people, as the branches, derived from him all their vitality and fruitfulness; and that, separated from him, their spiritual life was gone, John xv.

He "went about the villages," and entered the abodes of poverty; for it was a peculiar characteristic of his mission, that the poor had the gospel preached to them, Matt. xi. 5. Heathen philosophers despised the common people, and never thought of attempting to enlighten their minds; Jewish priests looked with pride and scorn upon the poor, as though they were void of understanding: but the Divine Missionary felt and acted differently towards them. Go, said he to the disciples of John, when enumerating the evidences that he was indeed the promised Messiah, Go, tell John that the poor have the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me, Matt. xi. 4—6. Offended! offended at thy gracious condescension: No, blessed Saviour! It was indeed the seal of thy Divine mission; and it is at once our boast and glory, our hope and consolation, that thou didst condescend to men of low estate. Oh how cheering to those who convey the gospel to the poor, and how should it encourage the poor to receive the gospel, that it is so expressly declared, that the poor are not beneath the great Redeemer's notice; that while their souls are as valuable and

as immortal, they are as capable, too, of appropriating and enjoying the gospel of man's salvation, as the rich and the great. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" James ii. 5.

Thus, then, the Divine Missionary "went about all the cities and villages" of Judea. And for what purpose? He went "teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." He went to convince sinners of their lost and ruined condition, of which they were awfully insensible; and he went to teach them the way of reconciliation and salvation by faith in himself. He went to explain to them the nature of his gospel kingdom. He taught them to distinguish the character of its subjects; their duties, their privileges, and their expectations. In doing this, he cut up by the root all expectation of worldly promotion or emolument from following him. Too many were inclined to follow him in hope of future worldly advantage. To such, when they eagerly pressed around him, and professed their determination to be his disciples, the heavenly Messenger replied: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," Luke ix. 58. "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life," John vi. 26, 27. "Do ye desire to sit on my right hand and on my left in my kingdom? Ye know not what ye ask.—Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," Matt. xx. 22, 27, 28. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," Matt. xvi. 24. And when asked who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, he called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xviii. 1—4.

When the Divine Missionary thus traversed the land of

his birth, to preach the gospel, he went to carry the very blessings that were needed by its inhabitants. He found them morally and spiritually uncultivated, barren, and desert; scattered, "as sheep having no shepherd," Matt. ix. 36; and he was moved with compassion towards them, and invited them to come and find security, repose, and provision under his heavenly guidance and care, Matt. xi. 28—30. He went to turn up the fallow ground of the heart, and cast in the good seed of the word; contemplating with benevolent joy the harvest of souls that should succeed to crown his toil. He went to open a fountain, of which, if a man should drink, he would never thirst more, and the streams of which should enrich and beautify the world, John iv. 10—14; vii. 37—39.

The Divine Missionary found the inhabitants of the cities and villages sunk in ignorance. It had been said of them long before, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," Hos. iv. 6. A like ignorance prevails over all mankind; and this ignorance the gospel alone is calculated to remove. Oh how many erroneous notions and fatal mistakes pervade both cities and villages now!—erroneous opinions respecting God, the plan of his government, the requirements of his law, the methods of his grace. Sinners in general conceive of the Almighty as altogether such an one as themselves, Psa. l. 21; as weak and forgetful, as false to his word, as flexible in his purpose, as regardless of good and evil. But the gospel tends to dispel these errors: it teaches that "God is not mocked," but that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap;" that "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption," Gal. vi. 7, 8; and that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10.

The gospel gives a man to understand that he may labour hard, and live hard, and suffer much, and go to hell at last; and that he must do so if he lives and dies an enemy to God by wicked works; but that if he be reconciled to God, by faith in the atonement of his dear Son, then he may patiently bear his afflictions, and even rejoice in them, for they are all working together for his good, and preparing him for heaven, Rom. v. 1—5; viii. 28, 18; 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

The gospel teaches, that till heaven and earth pass away, not one word of the law of God can ever be set aside, Matt. v. 18; and that therefore, since we have all broken the law of God, and come under its curse, "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified;" but that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" and that a sinner can be justified only by faith in the righteousness of Christ, Gal. iii. 10. 22; Rom. iii. 19—26; x. 4; Gal. ii. 16.

The gospel leads men to judge correctly of themselves. By it they learn, that instead of having a good heart to boast of, an evil heart is the source of all evil actions, Mark vii. 21—23; that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," Jer. xvii. 9; and that nothing can cleanse this corrupt heart but the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit, which is the free gift of God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, Psa. li. 10, 11; Tit. iii. 5, 6.

The gospel teaches men to set a just estimate on the world, and the things of the world, by placing them in one scale, and the soul and eternity in the other, Mark viii. 36, 37. It dispels the illusions by which men are chained down to the world, by showing them that it is all promise, but no performance; all shadow, and no substance; all deceit, and no truth, 1 John ii. 15—17.

The gospel teaches that all men are involved in rebellion against God, and are thus become guilty in the judgment of his law, and that in consequence of this, they are liable to all the curses of that law; for "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10. It teaches that all men are enslaved by sin, led captive by the devil at his will, 2 Tim. ii. 26; and that they, in consequence, are in a mournful condition of slavery. But the gospel teaches us too that Christ willingly endured the curse for us, and thus set us free from the penalty due to sin; that he came to deliver the captives of Satan, and to open the prison doors to them that were bound; and that his full and free invitation is, "Look unto me, and be ye saved," Isa. xlv. 22. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15.

This, then, is the gospel which the Divine Missionary came to teach and to preach; of which he was at once the

way and the directory, John xiv. 6; Mark xii. 14; and which is the only source of happiness in life, comfort in death, and security in eternity, to sinful man.

The Messenger of mercy not only preached and taught the gospel, but he healed "every sickness and every disease among the people." This was at once an evidence of his Divine mission, an indication of his compassion, and an emblem of the spiritual blessings he came to impart. He who could heal the sick, cleanse the leper, give sight to the blind, cast out devils, and raise the dead, had claims to be heard in the message he came to deliver; for no man could do such miracles as he did, unless God were with him, John iii. 2. And because he did among the Jews such works as no other man did, and they believed him not, but rejected him, therefore was their sin and condemnation awfully aggravated, John xv. 24. This was their condemnation, that light came into the world, and they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil, John iii. 19. And it was because the Jews hardened their hearts against these evidences of the heavenly nature of the Redeemer's mission, that they were finally given up to their unbelief, were cut off as a kingdom and a nation, and scattered abroad over the face of the earth. "How," then, "shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" Heb. ii. 3, 4.

Then the miracles of mercy wrought by the gracious Saviour were indications of his compassion. His heart was full of tenderness, sympathy, and pity. He wept with them that wept, and his were not unavailing tears. He delivered the wretched; he encouraged all who came to supplicate his mercy: and his heart is still touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and he teaches us that the same mind should be in us that was also in him, Matt. ix. 36; Luke vii. 13; John xi. 35; 1 Pet. ii. 21; Rom. xii. 15; Phil. ii. 5. And then his miracles of healing mercy were emblems of the greater miracles of sanctifying and saving grace. He who cleansed the leper with a word, can, by virtue of his own atonement, cleanse the soul from the fouler leprosy of sin. He who gave sight to the blind,

can enlighten the understanding, and enable us to discern the riches of Divine grace, and the fulness of heavenly glory, as revealed in the gospel. He who could cast out devils, can cast out of our souls the evil spirits that, by nature, inhabit and possess them. He who raised the dead, can, by his Spirit, quicken those who are "dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. ii. 1. And these miracles of sovereign, saving mercy are every day going on in the world under the power of the gospel, and fully prove it to be Divine. For this cause, said the apostle Paul, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," Rom. i. 16.

Such, then, was the Divine Missionary, and such the gospel he came to preach; and when his own testimony was finished, and he had poured out his soul unto death for the sin of man, and was about to ascend to heaven, to make intercession for the transgressors, he charged his disciples to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark xvi. 15, 16. And this command is as binding on his disciples now, as it was on the day in which it was uttered.

There are various ways of making known the gospel, and every Christian is bound to employ all such as lie within his power, and such as will most redound to the glory of God. Christ preached himself: his servants are to preach, not themselves, but him, as "the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6; the only medium of access to God; the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, John i. 29. They are to set forth the inestimable preciousness of the Lord Jesus, the riches of his grace, the fulness of his redemption, and the sweetness of that pardoning love which flows through his blood.

And what encouragement is there for those who, in singleness of heart, with devotedness to God, and with love to the souls of men, imitate the benevolent example of their Lord and Master! They are encouraged by the extent of his great atonement. He has made an infinite satisfaction for sin, and he has not shed his blood in vain; for myriads of souls shall through him be saved from sin and from hell, and brought to life and glory. "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied", Isa. liii. 10, 11.

And he who endeavours to direct the wayward mind of a child to the Saviour of sinners; or who gives by the way-side some little tract that tells of the gospel of the grace of God; or who puts a Bible or a Testament into the hands of the destitute; or who visits the secluded and neglected by-lanes and courts of the crowded city, or the village hovel, is encouraged to hope that the gospel he makes known may find its way to the heart and conscience of some poor sinner, who shall by its instrumentality be made acquainted with redeeming love, and thus promote the glory of Him, "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," Heb. xii. 2.

The fulness of the Spirit encourages every effort to make known the gospel. Even the preaching of our Lord himself did not convert a single soul, except when accompanied and borne home to the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit; and when he ascended to heaven, he left a promise that the influences of that blessed Spirit should be poured out upon men in fuller measure and richer abundance than had before been experienced. And now that he is exalted on high, he has not forgotten his promise, but gives efficacy by that Spirit to the word of his grace, and thus makes it the power of God unto salvation: and the same fulness of the Holy Spirit, by which thousands were converted under the simple preaching of the apostles, is still unimpaired, and ready to be poured forth in answer to the prayer of faith, to crown the efforts of Christian zeal and diligence for the conversion of the world.

The prophecies and promises of the Bible are replete with encouragement too. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign

that shall not be cut off," Isa. lv. 10—13. Are there obstacles to the spread of the gospel? "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it," Isa. xl. 4, 5.

Let, then, all the followers of the Divine Missionary imitate the example which he has left them. Let them be about their Father's business, Luke ii. 49. Let them work while it is day, John ix. 4. Let them be instant in season and out of season, 2 Tim. iv. 2. Let it be their meat and drink to be doing the will of Him who sent them, John iv. 34. Let them go about doing good, Acts x. 38.

Let them watch every opportunity, in city or in village, by the well or by the wayside, in the visit of friendship, or the chamber of affliction, of calling the attention of perishing sinners to the gospel of salvation, John iv.; Matt. x.; Matt. xiii.; Luke x. 38; John xi.; and let every effort be accompanied with fervent prayer to Him who alone can give success.

Let it be ever remembered, that the gospel is needed by all, and is applicable to all, and therefore should be earnestly and affectionately presented to all, 2 Cor. v. 14—20, and that it is the duty of all to embrace it.

Reader! have you received the gospel? If not, you are still in a lost and ruined state; and thus living and dying, you must perish for ever. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 2. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart," Heb. iv. 7.

The time for either spreading or receiving the gospel is short, and will very soon be for ever over. What is to be done, must be done quickly, for "all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.—The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever," Isa. xl. 6—8. "And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you," 1 Pet. i. 25.

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THE

REDEEMER'S TEARS OVER JERUSALEM.

WHEN our blessed Saviour was on his last journey to Jerusalem, a great multitude of people accompanied him, who had seen his miracles, and therefore believed him to be the promised Messiah, anticipating with great joy the commencement of his kingdom. This joy they manifested in a very remarkable manner. They did what was often done in the east at triumphal processions of the rulers of this world: they spread their garments in the way where the meek and lowly King was to pass, and as they approached Jerusalem, descending the Mount of Olives, they began to utter their acclamations, praising God with loud voices, shouting, and singing, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest," Luke xix. 38. In the midst of these manifestations of joy, Jesus suddenly begins to weep, and to utter an audible lamentation.

And when he was come nigh unto Jerusalem, it is written, "he beheld the city, and wept over it," Luke xix. 41. The Saviour wept! Let us pause here a moment. He wept, who was our Creator, our Lord and God, he on whom the future and final decision of our destiny depends, our Judge, the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth, whom all the angels of God worship; he at whose feet all the heavenly thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers cast their crowns—Jesus wept. Be astonished, O my soul, and adore! Oh that I could with my inmost soul, apprehend and feel the full amount of what is implied in these words—Jesus wept! That he should be displeased with the wicked, that he should drive out of the temple, with Divine power, the buyers, and sellers, and money changers; at this I wonder not. That his righteous and fiery indignation against sin should manifest itself in his countenance; that his eyes should be as a flame of fire, and that, from his presence, fierce and everlasting destruction should go forth against

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those who obey not his gospel; that the heavens and the earth should flee away before him: at all this I wonder not; for he is Jehovah, the holy, jealous, and mighty God, in whose presence nothing unclean can abide. But my wonder and astonishment is, that he *wept!* Oh how do we behold, in this weeping countenance of Jesus Christ, the kindness and love of God our Father! How did the Saviour, on this occasion, exhibit himself before the eyes of the whole world of sinners, as the true and real Son of man! How well do these tears become the character by which he is distinguished in his written word, when he is styled the Lamb of God! Here then we perceive that he had the heart of a man; he felt, like other men, what it is to have sorrow and anguish of heart; he was, in this respect, as well as every other, made like unto his brethren, the sons of Adam, only without sin; he was not ashamed in *this* way also to show himself as our brother.

And we may feel assured, that our Saviour's entrance into the glory of the Father has made no change in his sympathy and love. He is now, while sitting at the right hand of power, still the same Jesus that he ever was; the same as when he once lived under reproach and sufferings in the days of his flesh; "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Oh what comfort does the christian find in the belief, that the Dispenser of all heavenly blessings, on whose will our welfare depends in time and eternity, is a Being who possesses the feelings of our human nature! With what confidence may we therefore draw near unto him; with what comfort may we spread our complaints, and pour out our souls before him! Surely my poor sinful soul needs just such a High Priest as this, if it is not to recoil, through fear, from his presence, if it is to find quietness and complete repose in *him*. "We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 15, 16

But why did he weep? "He beheld the city, and wept over it." When *we* weep, our tears generally flow on our own account, and about things which, in some way or other, relate to ourselves. When anything goes contrary to us, when our schemes are crossed, when we think

we are hardly treated, when we are in adversity, then our tears flow. The most unfeeling person can be brought to weep, when God touches him in a tender part, and he finds himself cast into the furnace of affliction. There are also persons of sensibility, who, at hearing any affecting tale, whether of fact or fiction, or at the sight of human sufferings, are affected in a moment, even to tears. But all this has no depth; they can soon be made to smile and laugh again, as easily as they were made to weep. Such tears as these are often nothing but the effect of natural susceptibility, or of an excited imagination. It was not thus that our Saviour wept. Neither did he weep on his own account. He was now approaching the gates of Jerusalem. Behind him lay three-and-thirty years of a laborious and suffering life; how much humiliation and bitterness had he experienced, how many a sorrowful step had he taken through this wretched world! Before him lay a dreadful future,—his last agony, his ignominious sufferings and death: all this was clearly before the eye of his mind; he saw the very places before him where he was to endure the deepest humiliation and anguish. Who could have blamed him had he been ready to faint; had he poured out a flood of tears on his own account, on account of his long course of sufferings, which was to terminate so dreadfully? This would certainly have been no unmanly weakness. Yet for nothing of this kind did he weep. "He beheld the city, and wept over it." O my soul, would that thou couldst feel to the full what a Saviour, what a High Priest thou hast in Jesus!

Jerusalem, the great sinful city, was now before him in full view. God had for ages done unspeakably great things for that city, and for that people. He had given them his law; he had sent to them his servants, the prophets; he had shown inexpressibly great patience notwithstanding all their wickedness; he had manifested to them his mercies in a most distinguished manner. They had been his vineyard, as we read in the 5th of Isaiah, and "he had fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes," Isa. v. 2. These wild grapes Jesus beheld, and the sight of them forced tears from his eyes.

God had done still more. He had sent to them his own Son. This Son of his love had appeared among them; he had preached the counsel of God for their salvation; he had invited them to the kingdom of God; he had confirmed his Divine mission with miracles and signs, but they continued hardened; all this they heeded not. It was for all this that Jesus wept. He wept because they were so obdurate. He knew what temporal and eternal misery they were drawing upon themselves by this obduracy. He knew how the city would ere long be besieged, and hemmed in on every side; how it would be overthrown from its foundations, and laid even with the ground; he saw the calamities which would overwhelm its children; their dispersion over the whole world, the miseries under which they would groan, even to the present hour.

Look, then, once more into the tender heart of this gracious Saviour. What may we discover there? Certainly nothing but the most disinterested, compassionate, and merciful love to sinners. Here not a single thought of his own approaching and foreseen sufferings mingles with his tears; not a single feeling of resentment rises in his breast against a people who he knew would in a few days put him to death in the most wicked and outrageous manner: and indeed, how could he, who died out of love to us sinful men, who, even when nailed to the cross, prayed for his cruel murderers, have possibly indulged a feeling of resentment and revenge? He weeps over the sins of his people, he weeps over his enemies; not because they rewarded him evil for good, but because they are ripening apace for the Divine vengeance, and know not the day of their visitation. Oh what mercy and compassion is this! Our Saviour's tears are so many incontestable witnesses that his business, and the desire of his heart, is "to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke xix. 10; and even if we were not told the same in his written word, still these tears would proclaim, with a voice louder than any words, that he has a most compassionate heart towards poor sinners. I may boldly ask, Who is like unto him? Whose heart is like unto his heart? Where is there to be found such love as his? Where is there a Saviour like unto *our* Saviour? He is the incomparable, the indescribable Friend of sinners.

Reader! Dost thou know this Friend of sinners? Hast thou tasted any thing of his friendship? Hast thou ever

looked into the depth of his tender mercies? Art thou living in his love? Or, wouldst thou wish that he should now be troubled in spirit for thee? that he should sigh over thee, and say, "Oh that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes!" Luke xix. 42. Be assured that the Saviour has the same compassionate heart for us, which he had for Jerusalem. We are not to imagine he is indifferent about us, as we often are about our fellow-men; we are not to think that our salvation is as little laid to heart by him as it often is by ourselves. No; there is a heart above, that regards us here below with the greatest concern, and with more than maternal yearnings, taking the liveliest interest in our welfare.

If the heart of the Saviour were not inclined towards you, if you owed no obligation to him, then you need not give yourself so much concern as to what he thinks and feels respecting you. If you owed nothing to the Saviour, you might then have some colour for your indifference towards him; although such indifference would still betray a state of insensibility by no means honourable to your character. For indeed it is no indifferent consideration to any man of good feeling, whether he is beloved by others or not. But Jesus is not a person so unconnected with us. he has given us our life and being; he has sustained and cared for us even until now; the events of our life are ordered by him; the very air we breathe we owe to him; the food we eat comes from him; there is nothing in us, or belonging to us, that is not the free gift of his bountiful goodness; it is by him alone that we exist. But why do I dwell upon these things? He is our Redeemer; in this one word I say everything. Jesus redeemed our lost souls from condemnation; he bought them with his own blood; for that purpose he took upon him the likeness of sinful flesh; for that purpose he became, of his infinite mercy, a man of sorrows, and died upon the cross an ignominious and painful death, that he might stand security for us, pay the debt of guilt as our Surety, bear upon himself the Divine displeasure, and thus redeem us out of eternal condemnation into the inheritance and possession of heaven. Behold, then, and consider what love is this! Behold the bleeding, fainting, dying Saviour, Jesus, stretched on the accursed tree, mangled, pale, and

sinking into the night of death, for *our* sakes. And is it to love like this that we have been so indifferent? Oh how shall we escape if we disregard *such* love, "if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. ii. 3.

But, perhaps, some anxious soul, desiring salvation, may be inquiring, "What must I do, that I may rejoice the heart of my Saviour?" I reply, "Inasmuch as thy sins have caused the Lord Jesus the greatest sufferings, yea, the bitterest death, thou must no longer have any delight in sin; but thou must seriously lament and avoid it; and live, suffer, and die, solely for the honour and glory of Jesus thy Lord." If we continue in our earthly-mindedness, in our lusts and vain delights, in our enmities, in our revengefulness; if we persist in our worldly ways and principles; if we abide in our spiritual death, in that state which must be followed by death everlasting;—we are crucifying the Son of God afresh, we are setting ourselves in the ranks of his enemies. He is, as he ever was and ever will be, the determined enemy of sin.

It is most certain that the Saviour allows us most freely every enjoyment that does not set us in opposition to the will of God. But sin estranges us from communion with God, it makes us unhappy, it brings forth death; it is nothing but an empty phantom of happiness, and makes the conscience and the heart miserable; it is the work of the devil, who was "a murderer from the beginning," John viii. 44; and therefore the Saviour is its enemy. Yes: he who is the Friend of sinners is the enemy of sin.

What, then, must he have felt when, after the fall of our first parents, he beheld the triumph of Satan; when he contemplated the ruin and desolation wrought by the craft and subtlety of the devil upon his own creatures, in his own image; when he saw the millions of future sinners, when he saw me and thee, the captives of sin, without God, without life, without peace, oppressed with temporal sorrows of all kinds, and exposed to everlasting condemnation;—what must he have felt when he saw us thus sunk in shame and misery! We know what he felt; his word tells us very plainly: he was moved with compassion. In unspeakable mercy his heart was melted, the tenderness of his pity was moved toward us; and, as no created being was able to remove the curse that lay upon us, or to loose the bonds with which we were held under the power of sin,

behold he himself came as a Redeemer and a Deliverer. The business of his life upon earth was to make an everlasting separation between *sin* and *sinners*.

When Satan saw that the Saviour was come to destroy his works, his well-fortified strong-holds, he mustered together all his forces against him, and, in appearance, obtained a triumph over him; and when he, the great Shepherd of the sheep, gave up his life upon the accursed tree, then did the triumph of the devil and of sin appear complete. But it only appeared so; for all this was done by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Thus it was fore ordained that the judgment upon sin and the condemnation of it should be completed in the body of Christ; thus was He, "who knew no sin, made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21; thus was Satan, through his own malice, made to help in the work of bruising his own head. For now is the body of Christ, which was once slain, interposed between us and sin; that body, in which we have the surest testimony how infinitely the Saviour loves sinners, but how infinitely he hates sin; that body, by virtue of which all the closest ties between sin and us may now be dissolved. For, as Jesus died unto sin once, so may we ourselves now likewise die indeed unto sin, through faith in the power of his death; and, as he arose again from the dead, so may we also now walk in newness of life through faith in the power of his resurrection. Oh great and blessed mystery, which is hidden indeed from the wise and prudent of this world, but revealed to the simple-hearted—unto babes! The day of the resurrection will make it perfectly manifest before an assembled world. Then will it be evidently seen how gloriously, how completely, through Jesus Christ, eternal love hath redeemed his people from all sin, and exalted them again into the original glory of the image of God. Then, and not till then, will it be fully manifested, by his making all things new, what exceeding great love Jesus hath had towards poor sinners, and how severe was his conflict on this very account against sin itself, and how entirely he has overcome it. Behold, then, what manner of love the Saviour hath bestowed upon us!

Now, if there be any one who can read all this, and not lay it to heart, but can still obstinately continue in sin, which, as we have seen, is a thing so opposed to the blessed

Saviour, and from which the power of that Saviour is ready to redeem him; then the consequence must be that such a one must sink down deeper and deeper under the power and dominion of sin. Think not that it can ever be a matter of indifference whether you have had the gospel declared to you or not. The announcement of the love of God to men leaves no one in the state in which it finds him. Either he believes this message and lays it to heart, and then comes to pass the great dividing asunder between flesh and spirit, and the man is born again and becomes a child of God—or else he believes it not, but closes his heart in enmity against it, and then he becomes more and more hardened in his own perverseness, and goes on from sin to sin. This was the very case of the Jewish nation.

Jerusalem was reprobated and rejected, because, through unbelief, they would not receive and embrace the great dispensation of love which God had established in Jesus the true Messiah. This unbelief was the great sin and condemnation of the people of Israel. For what more could now be done for them, seeing they despised and rejected the very means God had bestowed on them to deliver them from sin? They were now at an agreement with sin, they were gone over entirely to the side of darkness and Satan; therefore judgment came upon them, even the condemnation of sin and Satan, and they were cast out from the presence of God. Every individual that closes his mind and heart against the truth and love of God, arrives at last at a point at which the mercies of the Friend of sinners can be no longer available for him. When, through continued unbelief, he has become hardened in sin, and suffered the time of his visitation to pass away unimproved, he grows at last so identified with sin itself, that even Jesus, the Merciful One, must condemn him as he condemns sin, because He is the enemy of sin. How dreadful is the thought! The last day will reveal it!

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MIRACLES

PROOFS OF THE

TRUTH OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

A MIRACLE is an effect or event, contrary to the established constitution or course of things; or a sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the assistance or by the permission of God, and accompanied with a previous notice or declaration that it is performed according to the purpose and power of God, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority or divine mission of some particular person. Now, nature is the assemblage of created beings: these beings act upon each other, or by each other, agreeably to certain laws, the result of which is, what we call the course or order of nature. These laws are invariable; it is by them God governs the world. He alone established them; He alone therefore can suspend them. Effects, which are produced by the regular operation of these laws, or which are conformable to the established course of events, are said to be natural; and every palpable deviation from the constitution of the natural system, and the correspondent course of events in that system, is called a miracle.

I have no more reason to disbelieve miracles, when well attested and not repugnant to the goodness or justice of God, only because they were performed several ages ago, than I have to disbelieve the more ordinary occurrences of Providence which passed before my own time, because the same occurrences may never happen again during my life. The ordinary course of nature proves the being and providence of God; these extraordinary acts of power prove the divine commission of that person who performs them.

The DESIGN of miracles is, not to prove the great doctrines of natural religion, but newly revealed doctrines,

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which neither were nor could be known to the reason of man. Consequently, believers in the bible do not argue in a circle, (as some modern objectors have asserted,) proving the doctrines first by the miracles, and then the miracles by the doctrines: because the doctrines which they prove by miracles, and the doctrines by which they try them are not the same doctrines.

The proper effect of miracles is, to mark clearly the divine interposition; and the scriptures intimate this to be their design: for, both Moses and the prophets, and Jesus Christ and his apostles, appealed to them, in proof of their divine mission. Hence we justly conclude, that he who performs a miracle, performs it in the name of God and on his behalf, that is to say, in proof of a divine mission.

Since the effect of miracles is clearly to mark the divine interposition, they must have characters proper to mark such interposition, and these CRITERIA are six in number.

I. A miracle should have an important end in view, and worthy of its Author.

For what probability is there, that the Almighty should specially interpose, and suspend the laws by which he governs this world, without any necessity, for a frivolous reason inconsistent with his wisdom, and unworthy of his greatness? Every miracle, then, must have a useful end, and one to which second causes are inadequate;—as, to authorize a prophet, or to establish a revelation. An end, so wise and so benevolent, is well worthy of the Supreme Being. This character of a true miracle is found in all the miracles, recorded as being performed by Moses and Jesus Christ. None of them are represented as having been wrought on trivial occasions. The writers who mention them were eye-witnesses of the facts, which they affirm to have been performed publicly, in attestation of the truth of the dispensations, which they were respectively commissioned to promulgate. The miracles, wrought by them, are so incorporated with their dispensations, that the one cannot be separated from the other. Further, the miracles of Moses and Jesus Christ were wrought in support of revelations which opposed all the religious systems, superstitions, and prejudices of the age. This circumstance alone sets them, in point of authority, infinitely above the Pagan prodigies recorded by ancient writers, as well as the pretended miracles of the church of Rome; many of which

may be clearly shown to have been mere natural events; others are represented as having been performed in secret, on the most trivial occasions, and long before the time of the writers by whom they are related; while such of them, as at first view appeared to be best attested, are evidently tricks contrived for interested purposes, to flatter power, or to promote the prevailing superstitions.

II. It must be instantaneously and publicly performed before credible witnesses.

A business, huddled up in a cloister before a few interested monks, is not properly attested. But when an action is performed before the public eye, as the miracles of Moses and those of Christ were, or before witnesses who have totally exculpated themselves of having any end but that of truth, we have all the attestation we can reasonably desire.

To this criterion it has been objected that in some cases Jesus Christ enjoined secrecy. To this objection it is sufficient to reply that he maintained a greater reserve during the former part of his ministry, than he did during the latter part; because he did not choose to be detained at the commencement of his course. When he had laid the foundation of his religion, the reserve which he had formerly used, was no longer necessary.

III. It must be sensible and easy to be observed: so that the senses of mankind can clearly and fully judge of it.

If a man display a phial full of blood, which sometimes congeals and sometimes liquefies, he has no right to our credit, unless he submit his phial to the examination of our senses. But when the waters of the Nile are turned into blood; when millions are fed with manna; when a man is raised from the dead; when four or five thousand people are fed by a pittance:—in such cases there can be no deception: our senses are the best means of judging.

IV. A miracle ought to be independent of second causes, or performed without any natural instrument.

To this it has been objected that in three of his miracles, John ix. 1—7. Mark viii. 23—26. and Mark vii. 32—37. Jesus Christ made use of external applications.

Answer.—These applications were made only upon the blind or the deaf; and in these cases, the reason for using them seems to have been, to convey to the persons on whom the miraculous cures were performed, a clear assurance that Jesus Christ was the Author of such cures.

V. Not only public monuments must be kept up, but some outward actions must also be constantly performed, in memory of the facts thus publicly wrought.

VI. Such monuments must be set up, and such actions and observances instituted, at the very time when those events took place, and be afterwards continued without interruption.

These two rules render it impossible that the belief of any facts should be imposed upon the credulity of after ages, when the generation asserted to have witnessed them had expired; for, whenever such facts come to be recounted, if not only monuments are said to remain of them, but public actions and observances had further been constantly used to commemorate them by the nation appealed to, ever since they had taken place, the deceit must be immediately detected, by no such monuments appearing, and by the experience of every individual, who could not but know that no such actions or observances had been used by them, to commemorate such events.

These criteria are applicable to the miracles of scripture.

1. With regard to the miracles recorded to have been wrought by Moses and Joshua; the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, being chosen by Jehovah to be his peculiar people for the preservation of true religion, the miracles performed on their behalf were unquestionably worthy of the Almighty Author.

These miracles were instantaneously performed at the command of Moses, and before great numbers of Egyptians or Israelites, sometimes in the presence of both nations; as in the case of the plagues, and the destruction of Pharaoh's army, which were witnessed by the whole people of Israel, and were felt by the Egyptians. In commemoration of these and other miraculous occurrences, were instituted the three great festivals of the Hebrews,—the Passover, the feast of Tabernacles, and the feast of Pentecost; all the first born of man and beast were solemnly consecrated to God; and the tribe of Levi was set apart, in special commemoration of the destruction of the first born of the Egyptians.

The memory of the miraculous supply of the Israelites with food was perpetuated by the pot of manna; and the twelve stones, taken out of the midst of Jordan at the time of the miraculous passage of the Israelites over that river, were set up by Joshua at Gilgal, as a perpetual memorial.

In all these instances, we have the preceding criteria most decisively established.

2. Consider the miracles related in the new testament.

(1.) The NUMBER of Christ's miracles was very great. About forty of them are narrated at length; the gospel history indeed is full of them; and one of Christ's biographers informs us, that he performed a greater number than are in any way recorded.

(2.) There was a great VARIETY in the miracles recorded in the new testament, which were of a permanent nature, and might be reviewed and re-examined, as in many instances we know they actually were. We behold Christ giving sight to the born blind; healing the obstinate leprosy; making those who wanted a limb, perfect; those who were bowed double, straight; those who shook with palsy, robust; nerving the withered arm with strength; restoring the insane and demoniacs to reason; and raising the dead to life. We behold the apostles also, restoring the lame from his birth, giving sight to the blind, healing all manner of diseases, and giving life to the dead. All these supernatural works were performed, not in a few instances with hesitation and diffidence, but they were very frequently repeated through a series of years; so that all suspicion of human management, compact, and imposture, was for ever precluded.

(3.) The DESIGN of Christ's miracles was important and worthy of their Almighty Author.

The end and purpose, for which these miracles were wrought, was, to carry on one vast and consistent plan of Providence, extending from the creation to the consummation of all things; to establish a system of belief, hope, and practice adapted to the wants and conditions of mankind; which had been revealed in part to the Jews, and promised to the prophets, and which tended to destroy the four great moral evils, so prevalent and so pernicious, namely, atheism, scepticism, immorality, and vice. In subservience to their grand object, (the confirmation of his divine mission,) the miracles of Christ were wrought for the most benevolent of all purposes,—the alleviation of misery in every form; and they carry in them the characters of the greatest goodness, as well as of the greatest power.

(4.) Consider further the GREATNESS of Christ's miracles. The diseases which he healed were inveterate, and had baffled every attempt of art: and this greatness of Christ's

miracles secures them against the suspicion of imposture. Impostors usually satisfy themselves with little tricks, because they are less open to suspicion, and usually gain credit.

(5.) Observe also the persons BY whom these miracles were accomplished.

They were wrought by persons who were known to be poor, unlearned, of low condition, and destitute of great friends and powerful patrons; who gave other proofs of their mission, and did not rest the whole of their cause upon miracles, but likewise insisted upon the reasonableness of the doctrines which they offered to examination. Further, they were offered by persons, who appealed to God, and declared that they would perform them.

(6.) The persons BEFORE whom the miracles were wrought, claim our especial notice.

They were wrought in a learned age, and before people who were not easily deluded, and were stigmatized by the name of magic.

(7.) The MANNER, too, in which these miracles were performed is equally worthy of attention for its publicity, simplicity, and disinterestedness.

(8.) Another circumstance, which confirms the validity and truth of these miracles, is, the EFFECTS produced by them. Numbers who were spectators of them, yielded to conviction, and embraced the gospel.

(9.) Lastly, the REALITY of the miracles of Christ and his apostles was never denied.

The miracles wrought by them were not transient mitigations of temporary maladies, but perfect and permanent cures of inveterate diseases: and the reality as well as the perfection of such cures are demonstrated by the facts, that not a few of the persons so healed lived for a long time afterwards, and were appealed to, by the first christian apologists, as living monuments of the truth of what they asserted: which appeals they would not have dared to make, if no miracles had taken place. Both Jewish and Heathen opposers of the christian faith, indeed, were constrained, however reluctantly, to admit the reality of the miracles of Christ and his apostles; though they ascribed them to magic, and denied their divine commission.

A very concise examination of a few of the principal miracles related in the new testament, will confirm and illustrate the preceding remarks.

1. The conversion of water into wine, John ii. 1—10. The Jewish weddings continued seven days: during the nuptial feast, from the poverty of the bridegroom and bride, or perhaps from the number of guests being greater than was expected, there was a deficiency of wine. Jesus commanded the servants to fill the vessels with water up to the brim: it was therefore impossible to mix any wine. The servants alone were privy to the process; and the governor of the feast gives his attestation to the miraculous supply in so easy and natural a manner, that we cannot but esteem it beyond the reach of artifice.

2. The miraculous feeding of five thousand men, besides women and children, Matt. xiv. 15—21. Mark vi. 35—44. John vi. 5—13.

The orderly disposition of the multitude, in ranks by hundreds and by fifties, exposed the miraculous operation to the view of all; so that deception was impossible. The gathering up of twelve baskets full of fragments is a proof that they had plenty of food; and the circumstance of the people being desirous to make Christ a king, (for which he rebuked them on the following day,) is a further proof of the reality of the miracle and of the impression which it had made.

3. The healing of the paralytic, Matt. ix. 2—8. Mark ii. 4—12. Luke v. 18—26.

This miracle was wrought in the presence of many witnesses, some of whom were enemies to Jesus Christ. The manner in which the sick man was presented, is unparalleled, and shows the confidence which he and others had in Christ's power of healing him. The manner too, in which Christ addressed him, is still more striking, beginning with the remission of his sins, without saying any thing concerning his malady.

4. The giving of sight to a man, who had been born blind, John ix. 1—7.

There are many remarkable circumstances in this miracle. The man had not become blind by any accident, which admits of relief. He was born blind. He did not ask to be restored to sight: thus there was no room for suspicion on his part.

The question, proposed by the disciples, John ix. 1, 2. proves that the man's blindness was from his birth; but the answer was so little in unison with their notions, that

it never could have entered their minds if they had not heard it from Jesus. The mode employed for giving this sight, was utterly inadequate to produce the effect which followed. Lastly, the miracle was performed in public, and immediately subjected to the strictest possible scrutiny.

5. The cure, by Peter and John, of a man lame from his birth, Acts iii. 1—10. is equally remarkable.

The man's person and lameness were universally known in Jerusalem ; a perfect cure was instantaneously wrought; and the transaction immediately underwent a severe examination, the effect of which was only to make the miracle still more widely known.

6. The raising of the daughter of Jairus to life, Matt. ix. 18—26. Mark v. 22—43. Luke viii. 41—56.

Though all the circumstances in the account of this miracle have the aspect of the most natural and unexpected occurrences, (which could neither have been combined by human contrivance, nor anticipated by human foresight,) no circumstance was wanting, either to ascertain the reality of the miracle, or, without any apparent ostentation or design, to give it the most unquestionable publicity.

7. The raising of the widow's son from the dead at Nain, Luke vii. 11—15.

The fact of the young man's death was indisputable : a considerable number of her townsmen accompanied his mother with his remains to the grave: and in their presence the miracle was instantaneously and publicly performed.

8. The resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, John xi.

The precise time of Christ's arrival at Bethany gave his enemies an opportunity of observing the transaction. "Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary :" and the restoring of Lazarus to life has every character of a miracle. For it was instantaneously and publicly performed before credible witnesses ; it was independent of second causes; and the end for which it was performed was important, for it was to attest the divine mission of the Son of God.—*See Horne's Deism Refuted ; also, Tract, No.* 319, *On the Resurrection of Christ.*

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No. 450.

TESTIMONIES

TO

THE TRUTH OF PROPHECY,

FROM

THE WRITINGS OF VOLNEY.

READER, you claim the right to judge for yourself, and you are entreated to use that right in examining the evidences of the truth of the Scriptures. It may be that you have heard the opinions of believers ridiculed, and their arguments treated with scorn because they were not deemed impartial witnesses on this subject. Should such have been the case, we here bring before your view substantial facts, asserted by a professed infidel, and therefore not liable to the objections which are raised against Christian writers. The facts to which your attention will be called are indisputable, and most of the particulars to which they relate have been verified by the personal examination of the most recent travellers, and may now be scrutinized by any one who chooses to visit Syria.

The object of the present tract is to adduce facts which prove the Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, from the writings of Volney, the author of "The Ruins of Empires," and "Travels in Syria," a most determined infidel. Not only does he attest facts which constitute the literal fulfilment of numerous prophecies, but he describes the peculiar and characteristic features of the desolations foretold by them, with as much detail and precision as if he had copied the prophetic denunciations rather than related his own observations; or as if he had aimed to prove that they had been fulfilled to the very letter. Nor can any authority be adduced superior to Volney as a correct and faithful describer of the countries which he visited; and his descriptions are as minute as the testimony on the subject is unexceptionable. "It has been reserved for the genius of Volney," says Malte Brun, "so to combine the detached accounts of other travellers, antiquaries, and naturalists with the results of his own observation and study, as to offer to the world a complete description of Syria."

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799;
56, PATERNOSTER ROW; AND 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

The present state of Judea and its inhabitants, and of adjacent countries, has been foretold by various prophecies, of the exact accomplishment of which we may have at one view the most satisfactory proof, by placing them without note or comment, beside the assertions of a decided enemy to Christianity.

PROPHECIES OF JUDEA AND THE ADJOINING COUNTRIES.

Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest, Lev. xxvi. 34, 35.

Your land strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers, Isa. i. 7.

Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled, Jer. iv. 20. And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it, Ezek. vii. 21. Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses, Ezek. vii. 24. Mischief shall come upon mischief, Ezek. vii. 26. Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Luke xxi. 24.

Your highways shall be desolate, Lev. xxvi. 22.

EXTRACTS FROM VOLNEY

Every day as I proceeded on my journey, I found fields lying waste.—*The Ruins*, c. i.

Why are these lands stript of their former blessings (numerous flocks, fertile fields, and abundant harvests)? Why have they been banished, as it were, and transferred for so many ages to other nations and different climes?—*Ib.* c. ii.

During the last 2500 years, ten invasions may be enumerated, which have successively introduced different foreign nations.—*Travels in Syria*, c. xxii.

In the year 622 (636) the Arabian tribes, collected under the banners of Mohammed, seized, or rather laid it waste. Since that period, torn to pieces by the civil wars of the Fatimites and the Ommiades, wrested from the Caliphs by their rebellious governors, taken from them by the Turcoman soldiery, invaded by the European crusaders, retaken by the Mamelukes of Egypt, and ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars, it has at length fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks.—*Ib.* p. 352.

In the interior parts of the country there are neither great roads, nor canals, nor even bridges, etc. The roads in the mountains are extremely bad It is remarkable that throughout Syria, neither a wagon nor a cart is to be seen.—*Ib.* c. xxxviii.

The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth, Isa. xxxiii. 8.

There is no establishment, either of post or of public conveyance. No one dares travel alone, by reason of continual danger. It is necessary for travellers to wait till several are going to the same place; or to take the opportunity of joining the suite of some great man, who may act as protector, or, as is more frequently the case, oppressor, to the whole caravan.—*Ib.*

The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness, Jer. xii. 12.

These precautions are particularly necessary in those parts of the country which lie open to the Arabs, such as Palestine, and the whole frontier of the desert.—*Ib.*

Thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein, Ezek. xii. 19.

The merchants live in a state of continual alarm, etc. The same dread prevails in the villages, every peasant fearing equally to excite the envy of his fellows, or the avarice of the Aga and his soldiery.—*Ib.*

The condition of the peasantry is wretched. Their sole subsistence is a little coarse barley bread, with onions or lentils; and water their only beverage. Agriculture is in the most deplorable state, no more grain being sown than is absolutely necessary for bare sustenance.—*Ib.* c. xxxvii. and xxxviii.

The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, Isa. xxiv. 5.

Corruption is habitual and universal.—*Ib.* c. xxxiv.

The mirth of tabrets ceaseth; the joy of the harp ceaseth, Isa. xxiv. 8.

They have no music but vocal; for they neither know nor esteem that which is instrumental.—*Ib.* c. xxxix.

All the merry-hearted do sigh, Isa. xxiv. 7.

Their singing is accompanied with sighs, etc. They may be said to excel most in the melancholy strain.—*Ib.*

They shall not drink wine with a song, Isa. xxiv. 9.

Good cheer would expose them to extortion, and wine to a corporal punishment.—*Ib.* c. xl.

The noise of them that rejoice endeth. All joy is darkened;

In whatever they say or do they maintain the same grave

the mirth of the land is gone, Isa. xxiv. 8.

They that dwell therein are desolate, Isa. xxiv. 6.

I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it, Lev. xxvi. 32.

Every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, Jer. xviii. 16.

Your cities are burned with fire, Isa. i. 7.

The forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, Isa. xxxii. 14.

The defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness, Isa. xxvii. 10.

When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire, Isa. xxvii. 11.

It is a people of no understanding, Isa. xxvii. 11.

and phlegmatic air. Instead of the frank and lively manner which so universally prevails among us, their behaviour is serious, austere, and melancholy. They rarely laugh; and the gaiety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium.—*Ib.*

The government of the Turks in Syria is a mere military despotism; that is, the bulk of the inhabitants are subject to the will of a faction of armed men who dispose of everything according to their own interest and pleasure.—*Ib.* c. xxxiii.

So feeble a population in so excellent a country may well excite our astonishment; but this will be increased if we compare the present number of inhabitants with that of ancient times.—*Ib.* c. xxxii.

The appearance of the village of Loudd, formerly Lydda and Diospolis, is precisely that of a place which has been recently ravaged by the enemy and by fire. Arimathea is almost as completely in ruins as Loudd itself. —*Ib.* c. xxxi.

At every turn are found ruins of towers, turrets, and moated castles, left as a dwelling for owls and scorpions.—*Ib*

Beyond (Jaffa) the country was once full of large olive trees; but the Mamelukes having cut them all down, either for the pleasure of cutting, or to use as firewood, Jaffa has lost the benefit of them.

The country around (Arimathea) has been planted with olive trees; but they are perishing through the mischief done to them by the people, either openly or secretly.—*Ib.*

A people among whom the simplest arts are in a state of

barbarism; and the sciences quite unknown. The barbarism of Syria is complete.—*Ib.* c. xxxix.

It may be said that the means of instruction do not exist among them.—*Ib.*

Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard: they have trodden my portion under foot, Jer. xii. 10.

The Turcomans, Kourds, and Bedouins have no fixed abode, but wander about with their tents and flocks, etc. The Arabs encamp everywhere upon that part of the frontier of Syria which borders upon their deserts; and even upon the plains in the interior, as those of Palestine, Bequâa and Galilee. —*Ib.* c. xxii.

The pastoral or wandering tribes of Syria.—*Title of* c. xxiii.

They have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness, Jer. xii. 10.

I have visited the places that were the theatre of so much splendour, and have beheld nothing but solitude and desertion.—*The Ruins*, c. ii.

Nothing is to be seen but solitude and sterility.—*Ib.*

The whole land shall be desolate. Yet will I not make a full end, Jer. iv. 27. In that day it shall come to pass, that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin. When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done, Isa. xvii. 4; xxiv. 13.

I looked for those ancient people and their works, and all I could find was a faint trace, like that left in the sand by the foot of the passenger.—*Ib.*

They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit, Jer. xii. 13.

Man sows in anguish, and reaps nothing but vexation and cares —*Ib.*

No flesh shall have peace, Jer. xii. 12.

War, famine, and pestilence assail him in turn.—*Ib.*

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars, Isa. xxxii. 13.

The earth produces only briars and wormwood.—*Ib.*

I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images. I will bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, Lev. xxvi. 30, 31.

The temples are thrown down. *Ib*

The palaces shall be forsaken, Isa. xxxii. 14.

The palaces are demolished.—*Ib*

I will destroy the remnant of the sea-coasts, Ezek. xxv. 16.

I will make your cities waste, Lev. xxvi. 31.

I beheld, and all the cities thereof were broken down, Jer. iv. 26. Every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein, Jer. iv. 29.

The inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left, Isa. xxiv. 6.

The cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, Ezek. xii. 20.

But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, Isa. vi. 13.

I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil. The robbers shall enter into it, and defile it, Ezek. vii. 21, 22.

How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? Jer. xii. 4.

And the stranger that shall come from a far land, when they

The ports are filled up.—*Ib.*

The towns are destroyed, and the earth stript of inhabitants.—*Ib.*

The territories of Yamnia and Yoppa, in Palestine alone, says the philosophical geographer Strabo, were formerly so populous that they could bring forty thousand armed men into the field. At present they could scarcely furnish three thousand.—*Travels in Syria*, c. xxxii.

Every day I met with deserted villages.—*The Ruins*, c. i.

The plain country is rich and light, calculated for the greatest fertility.—*Travels in Syria*, c. i. s. 6.

When the Ottomans wrested Syria from the Mamelukes, they only considered it as the spoil of a vanquished enemy, &c.—*Ib.*, c. xxxiii. s. 1. As the porte never restores anything to a nation which it has pillaged, it evidently does not disapprove of robbery which is profitable to itself.—*Ib.*

Like most hot countries it is destitute of that fresh and living verdure which almost constantly adorns our own lands, and of the grassy and flowery carpet which covers the meadows of Normandy and Flanders. The earth in Syria always looks dusty. Yet, probably, the country would have been shaded by forests, had it not been laid waste by the hand of man.—*Ib.* c. xxxii. s. 1.

From whence proceed such melancholy revolutions? For

see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it,—even all nations, shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Deut. xxix. 22, 24.

The anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book, Deut. xxix 27.

The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant, Isa. xxiv. 5.

I will not turn away the punishment of Gaza, Amos i. 6. Gaza shall be forsaken, Zeph. ii. 4. Baldness is come upon Gaza, Jer. xlvii. 5.

Ashkelon is cut off, with the remnant of their valley, Jer. xlvii. 5.

Ashkelon shall be a desolation, Zeph. ii. 4.

Ashkelon shall not be inhabited, Zech. ix. 5.

I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, Amos i. 8.

The remnant of the Philistines shall perish, Amos i. 8.

The kingdom shall cease from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria, Isa. xvii. 3.

They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, (in Idumæa,) but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing, Isa. xxxiv. 12. I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel, Hos. i. 4.

As for Samaria, her king is cut off as the foam upon the water, Hos. x. 7. Samaria shall become desolate, Hos. xiii. 16.

I will cut off the pride of the Philistines, Zech. ix. 6.

what cause is the fortune of these countries so strikingly changed? Why are so many cities destroyed? Why is not that ancient population reproduced and perpetuated? Why are these regions deprived of the blessings they formerly enjoyed? —*The Ruins*, c. ii.

A mysterious God exercises his incomprehensible judgments! He has doubtless pronounced a secret malediction against this land.—In what consists that anathema of Heaven? Where is the Divine curse which perpetuates the desolation of these countries?—*Ib.*

The white marble ruins which are still remaining at Gaza, show that it has been at some former time the abode of wealth and luxury. At present, it is a small unfortified town —*Ib.* c. xxxi.

The waste ruins Askelon.—*Ib.*

Several ruins are met with in succession, the most considerable of which is Ezdoud, at the present time noted only for scorpions.—*Ib.*

All the rest of the country is a desert.—*Ib.*

I enumerated the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumæa, of Jerusalem and Samaria, of the warlike states of the Philistines, and the commercial republics of Phenicia. This Syria, said I to myself, which is now, almost depopulated, then contained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets. Everywhere might have been seen cultivated fields, frequented roads, and crowded habitations. Ah! what is become of those ages of abundance, and of life? What is become of so

None shall pass through it (Idumæa) for ever and ever, Isa. xxxiv. 10.

From generation to generation it shall lie waste, Isa. xxxiv. 10. All the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes, Jer. xlix. 13. Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by it shall be astonished. No man shall abide there, saith the Lord, neither shall a son of man dwell in it, Jer. xlix. 17, 18. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, Ezek. xxxv. 4.

Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be for an habitation of dragons and a court for owls, Isa. xxxiv. 13.

Thy riches and thy fairs, (O Tyrus,) thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that are in thee, and in all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin, Ezek. xxvii. 27.

I will make her (Tyre) like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, Ezek. xxvi. 4, 5.

Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down, Isa. xxxiii. 9. The cedar is fallen; the defenced forest (marg.) is come down, Zech. xi. 2.

The rest of the trees of his many splendid productions of the hand of man?—*The Ruins*, c. ii.

This country (Idumæa) has never been visited by any traveller, though it richly deserves it. —*Travels in Syria*, c. xxxi.

From the report of the Arabs of Bakir, and the inhabitants of Gaza, who frequently go to Mäan and Karak, on the road of the pilgrims, there are to the south-east of the Lake Asphaltites (Dead Sea,) within three day's journey, upwards of thirty ruined towns, absolutely deserted. This was the country of the Idumæans, who, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, were almost as numerous as the Jews.—*Ib.*

In several of them are found large colonnaded buildings, which may have been ancient temples, or at least Greek churches. The Arabs sometimes fold their flocks in them, but generally avoid them, on account of the enormous scorpions with which they abound.—*Ib.*

Where are those fleets of Tyre, those dockyards of Arad, those workshops of Sidon, and that multitude of mariners, pilots, merchants, and soldiers? Where are those labourers, those dwellings, those flocks, and that picture of animated nature of which the earth seemed proud? —*The Ruins*, c. ii.

The whole population of the village (Tyre) consists of fifty or sixty poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground, and a trifling fishery.—*Travels in Syria*, c. xxix.

Among the rocks appear remains of the so much boasted cedars, which, however, are anything but majestic.—*Ib.* xx s. 2.

There are not more than four

forest shall be few, that a child may write them, Isa. x. 19.	or five trees of any size.—*Ib. note.*
I will sell the land (Egypt) into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the Lord have spoken it, Ezek. xxx. 12.	Such is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago, of her natural proprietors, she has been successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and at length to the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks.—*Travels*, c. vi.
She (Nineveh) is empty, and void, and waste, Nah. ii. 10. Their place is not known where they are, Nah. iii. 17.	Where are those ramparts of Nineveh?—*The Ruins*, c. ii. Of Nineveh of which scarcely the name is left.—*Ib.* c. iv.
The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, Jer. li. 58.	Where are those walls of Babylon?—*Ib.* c. ii.
Cast her (Babylon) up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left, Jer. l. 26.	Nothing is left of Babylon but heaps of earth, trodden under foot of men, *Ib.* c. iv.

"O ye solitary ruins! ye silent walls!" exclaims Volney, "how many useful lessons, how many affecting and striking reflections do ye offer to the mind which is capable of considering you aright!" *The Ruins*, c. iii.

It is true that these ruins do afford most important lessons, and especially as to the truth of prophecy. Never was a man more completely vindicated from the charges of his enemies and calumniators, than is the truth of the Bible by the writings of the writer who has dared to call in question its Divine authority. That very man, whose senses were spell-bound in the thickest darkness of error, has, however undesignedly, struck a blow powerful enough not only to shake, but to overturn the erroneous opinions of any individual who will calmly interrogate these ruins, and listen to the voice of their reply.

It is true, as Volney affirms, that they are not the effect of chance. Chance is but an empty name invented for the purpose of hiding ignorance and sheltering sloth; not a power capable of overthrowing cities, and changing kingdoms into mighty deserts. The destruction of empires demonstrates the wickedness of the men by whom their ruin has been effected and perpetuated Everywhere, with-

out exception, the Scriptures point out in these ruins the punishment of sin, and thereby make manifest the moral government of God, and show the untiring vigilance with which his providence enters into the minutest details of human events. Considered in their true light, as the express and literal fulfilment of numerous prophecies, they prove, beyond all doubt, the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. We must be deaf to reason, and blind worshippers of the idol chance, if, for the sake of listening to the declamations of a lying philosophy, we refuse to hear that spirit of prophecy which is the testimony of Jesus, while it proclaims, "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth." We here invite you, therefore, to behold the fulfilment of what the Lord has foretold, and to be convinced of the undeniable fact that the Bible is the word of God, who, having from the beginning determined the end, has caused it to be written in his book, that all men may know that he alone is God.

If you will calmly and carefully examine the prophecies of Scripture, as here confronted with the testimony of Volney, you will be compelled to submit to such satisfactory evidence. Volney, however, is but one among a multitude of witnesses, and the prophecies here cited form but a small part of those contained in the Bible. The judgments of God, as written in that book, are repeated by thousands of ruins as by so many echoes. The sins of mankind are all known unto the Lord; the guilty shall find no favour in his sight, and none that riseth up against him shall prosper. The anger of nations is the rod of his displeasure. The convulsions of kingdoms and empires prove the infallible certainty of "the word of God which abideth for ever;" and as the most potent among them are successively laid in the dust, a voice from amidst their ruins is heard proclaiming, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled," Matt. v. 18. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. Be still and know that I am God," Psa. xlvi. 8, 10. "Come and see the works of God. He is terrible in his doing toward the children of men. He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves," Psa. lxvi. 5, 7. "Sin is the ruin of nations."

While the revolutions and overthrow of cities and

empires, as described by Volney, prove that the prophets by whom they were predicted in such striking detail, were Divinely inspired, and that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21; it must also be remembered that these very prophets all bear witness to Jesus Christ, who came into the world to make atonement for sin, and to save his people from the wrath to come. By a succession of inspired men, our attention is directed to the way of salvation, which in his unbounded love to a sinful world, combined with his infinite abhorrence of sin, God has condescended to provide for the human race. His own word reveals this way of salvation. "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. "Search the Scriptures," said Jesus himself to the Jews, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," John v. 39. Whosoever therefore either attempts to adulterate or wilfully to misconstrue the Scriptures for the purpose of supporting error and superstition, or to withhold it from the people, and give them in its stead dogmas of mere human invention, is guilty of enormous sin. What plainer proof, indeed, can be given of the weakness of a cause, than the attempt to hinder men from examining for themselves whether it is consistent with that Divine will, which ought to be the foundation of all faith, and of every institution of religion?

If we possessed no written revelation of the will of God, we must of necessity seek some other means of discovering the way in which we might please him and secure the salvation of our souls. But we are not left to such a difficulty. God has given us the Bible, that infallible testimony which is thus described by the Psalmist: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes," Psa. xix. 8, 9. The testimony of which St. Paul speaks, when he says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The endeavour, therefore, either to dissuade or to prevent men from reading the Scriptures, must be, in the sight of God, an offence of equal magnitude with any of those which have brought desolation upon the finest countries on the face of the earth. Nor are

they much less criminal, who, for the sake of upholding certain peculiar doctrines and ceremonies, which, in the minds of some, are identified with Christianity itself, refuse to bring them to the test of Scripture, and will not submit to its supreme authority. By such means as these, irreligion is encouraged and sanctioned, and immortal spirits are driven to perdition. It is, however, an awful truth that the blood of these lost souls will be required at the hands of those, who, having taken from them the key of knowledge, have closed against them that kingdom of heaven which Jesus Christ has by his own death opened to all believers.

Reader, do you wish to believe what is true? Are you willing to be convinced that the word of God is of Divine original, and therefore cannot fail? Take the Scriptures, then:—they are worthy of your perusal, and the very design of their existence is, that they may be read by every man. Get for yourself this precious book, and read it with all the attention of which you are capable. Let no man forbid what God has commanded. Let no man, be he whom he may, prevent you from acquiring the knowledge contained in the word of God. You have seen that according to the testimony of an infidel, by facts attested by himself, the very facts by which he sought to overturn the Christian faith, that the judgments of God are proved to be true, and that the same word of truth, which contains the prophecies of these remarkable facts, teaches also the way of salvation. Take care, then, that while you "believe the truth" you have no "pleasure in unrighteousness," 1 Thess. ii. 12; for as no nation can escape the just judgments of God, so neither shall any individual; and there is no other way of deliverance from the dominion and consequences of sin, but through the merits of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the only Mediator and Intercessor between God and man.

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No. 44.

THE

EVIDENCE AND EFFECTS OF THE GOSPEL.

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

YOU have long gloried in the name of christian! The bible, the bible has been your religion. Your learned men have defended it; your martyrs have bled for it. It has been the support of the aged, the guide of the young, the consolation of the sick, and the hope of the dying. Yet some men, more cruel than the wretch who robs you of your daily bread, would deprive you of this heavenly treasure. But will you, can you part with it? Guilty and dying creatures as you are, can you part with that word which tells you, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life?" Can you renounce that Saviour who says, "I am come that you might have life—I am come to seek and to save that which was lost?"

At the grave of your dearest earthly comfort, what do you feel when these words are pronounced, "I am the resurrection and the life?" Can you part with the hope they give you?—In an hour of pain and sickness, can any consolation equal that which assures you, that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him?" Look around you and see the miseries occasioned by ungoverned passions and unbridled lusts: and can you part

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with that heavenly book which turns the lion into a lamb, which teaches you to lay aside all malice, to be kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbour as yourself? This is the bible that you are called by some to give up.

They tell you it is not true; but is there any thing in the gospel that appears like a cunningly-devised fable? Can you suppose that the apostles invented the story of Jesus? Can you believe them liars, when they declare, "That which we have seen, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, declare we unto you?" Had not the story been true, would Peter have ventured to declare in the presence of all the Jews, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses?" And they not only published the truth, but wrought miracles to prove it; and those miracles were not done in a corner, but in the face of the world, in the face of enemies. Would they have suffered and laid down their lives in defence of what they knew to be false? Had it been a forgery, would not they and their story have perished together? Can you read their writings, so full of piety, simplicity, and benevolence, and think them false witnesses of God?

Read the LIFE OF JESUS.—Trace him from his cradle in the manger, to his cross and the grave, and then say, "Is not this the Christ?"

At his birth angels were his witnesses; they brought the glad news from heaven, and sang, "Good will to men." While the Son of God lay an infant below, his record was on high; for there appeared a strange new star, which was his witness in heaven. The wise men of the east were his witnesses, when they came from afar and paid tribute—gold, frankincense, and myrrh, to him as King of the Jews. Simeon and Anna in the temple, by the spirit of prophecy, witnessed to the holy Child Jesus; and the doctors, with whom he disputed at twelve years old, were his witnesses, that there was something in him more than man. At his baptism, the Father and the Spirit witnessed to the Son of God; they told the world that this was the Messiah; the Father, by a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and the Spirit, by descending upon him like a dove. His life was a life of wonders, and each of them witnessed to the truth of his commission, and to the divinity of his doctrine. Every

blind eye that he opened saw and witnessed Jesus. Every one of the dead that he raised was his witness. Miracles attended him to the cross, and the grave opened, and made a passage for him to his Father's right hand. That salvation which began to be spoken by Jesus the Lord, was afterwards published by those that heard him; God himself bearing them witness with signs and wonders.

View the CHARACTER OF JESUS.—Is there any thing in him that looks like an impostor? Never man spake like this man. Read those gracious words, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Well might he say, "To-day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." What was his language to the weary and heavy-laden sinner? "Come unto me, and I will give you rest. Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

To the poor, he said, "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled: he that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

When the lame, the blind, and the deaf, crowded round him, did he turn away from them? No: he was the good Physician; he had compassion on them, and healed them all. He wept with those that wept. When he met the poor widow following her only son to the grave, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, "Weep not," and he raised the young man to life, and delivered him to his mother.—He went about doing good.

What was the temper he showed? He was meek and lowly of heart. When he was reviled, he reviled not again. His language was, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He washed his disciples' feet, and then said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you."

In what beautiful parables does he teach you the compassion of your heavenly Father! Read the parables of the lost sheep, and of the prodigal son, and you will

surely say, "I will arise and go to my Father." Read the parable of the pharisee and the publican, and learn to be ashamed of every spark of pride in your heart.

Thus Jesus lived, and thus he taught; attend him to the CROSS, and see how he died.

Read his last farewell discourse to his disciples; the heart must be hard indeed that is not melted by its tenderness and love. "Let not your hearts be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends; ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." See him eating the last passover with his disciples: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." See him give the kind memorials of his death: "Do this in remembrance of me." Thus he parted with his beloved friends, and went to drink the bitter cup of suffering. In these words read the agony of his soul, and his entire resignation to his heavenly Father's will:—"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."

See him brought as a lamb to the slaughter, or as a good shepherd giving up his life for his sheep; wounded for your transgressions, bruised for your iniquities, that by his stripes you might be healed. See him mourning over sinners, praying for his murderers, granting pardon to the dying penitent, and then crying out, "It is finished! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." While you thus behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, are you not ready to cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive honour and glory and blessing?" Follow him to the tomb, "and see the place where the Lord lay."

SEE HIM RISING FROM THE GRAVE, "the first fruits of them that slept." And rejoice in that promise which says, "Because I live, ye shall live also. I ascend to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and your God." After

he had tarried some time on earth, conversing with his disciples, instructing them, opening their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and promising the Holy Spirit to endue them with power from on high, he led them out to Bethany, "and lifted up his hands and blessed them; and while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."

And now, friends, what think you of Jesus? Are you tempted to leave him? He says to you, as he did to his disciples, "Will ye also go away?" Do not your hearts reply, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. No—we will not leave thee; though the doctrine of the cross may be to some a stumbling-block, and to others foolishness; we will esteem it the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Blessed Jesus! thou art the Sun of Righteousness, we will not leave light for darkness; we feel our guilt, and we need such a High Priest to make atonement for us. Our corrupt natures need the sanctifying influence of thy grace; our weak natures want the assistance of thy good Spirit; our dying natures want all the hope thou hast given us of life and immortality! No, we cannot leave thee: amidst all the sorrows and temptations of the world we will look to thee who hast endured the cross, and overcome the world. Thou art the Captain of our salvation, and by thy grace we will follow thee till we overcome, and "sit down with thee on thy throne, even as thou also hast overcome, and sat down with thy Father on his throne."

After the delightful view we have taken of the gospel of Christ, are you not resolved to hold your bible fast?—Yes, you are determined still to bear the name of christian. But the name of christian will not save you; the gospel must be wrought into your hearts, or it will not be your comfort in life, and your hope in death. You must feel it as the power of God to your salvation. If this gospel has created you anew in faith, and hope, and holiness; if it has turned your heart from earth to heaven, and subdued the sinful inclinations of your nature, surely this will be a sufficient proof to your own soul, that this gospel is divine. Why have so many disgraced the gospel they profess? Why do others turn their backs upon it, and renounce it? It is because they were never christians indeed; they never felt its power: the gospel wrought

into your hearts will be your best defence against the arrows of infidelity.

Whatever may be your situation in life, you may meet with some so profane as to treat the gospel with contempt, or endeavour to banter you out of it with a jest or a sneer. Should they ask you—"How do you know that christianity is the true religion? What evidence have you that it came from God?" It will be a poor defence indeed to say, "It is the religion of our country, and we were born and bred up to it." You may not be able to defend your religion with the tongue of the learned, but you may glory even in the face of infidels, and say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God to the salvation of my soul. It has softened my heart to repentance; it has changed my sinful nature; it has relieved my conscience under a sense of sin, and given me a solid hope of pardon; it has laid the foundation of eternal life within me; and can I be laughed or bantered out of this gospel? Though I am not able to solve all the difficulties in the bible, or prove that every word or syllable of it is divine, yet I am well assured that the doctrine that has had this powerful effect on my soul must come from God; it is the sense of scripture, and not the mere letter of it, on which I build my hope. I am thankful for the learning that defends my bible from the attack of infidels, but, blessed be God, my faith and hope are not built upon particular translations, or single texts, but upon the sum and substance of the gospel: every translation contains this blessed truth, that 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;' every translation encourages my hope, and tends to sanctify my heart."

Should a philosopher pretend to prove that bread is not wholesome, or that water is useless to allay thirst, I may boldly maintain the happy use of bread and water; for I am daily nourished by bread, and my thirst is perpetually quenched by water. The quibbles of logic, against the experience of a true christian, are but as darts of straw and stubble against the scales of leviathan. No, I cannot part with the bread that gives life to my soul.

They tell me there are mysteries in my religion, but this does not weaken my faith; the kingdom of nature has its mysteries; and why should not the kingdom of grace contain some doctrines that my weak reason cannot fully un-

derstand? The child does not understand all that is done by a kind father for its future good. I am in the infancy of my being, and can know but little of God in his ways of providence or of grace. But he has revealed enough to convince me of his faithfulness and love; and I can trust my heavenly Father, that what I know not now I shall know hereafter. I know in whom I have believed.

Let us now look back upon our ownselves, and what testimony have we given to the glory of the gospel, to the truth of the religion of Jesus? Do any hold the truth in unrighteousness? Oh! that they would consider that they are enemies to the cross of Christ. An unholy follower of the holy Jesus!—better far to be an unholy heathen; for it will be more tolerable for even such in the day of judgment. We might say, "Rather than walk unworthily of the gospel, renounce the sacred name for ever;" but we would rather lead you to that Saviour whose arms of mercy are open even for you: he can pardon even the wretch that wounds him. "Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings: cease to do evil, learn to do well;" and "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." Then shall it be said, "Such were some of you, but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Would you honour, would you propagate the gospel? Let that eternal life which is wrought in your souls by this gospel, express itself in all your outward behaviour among men.

When men behold your faith and holy fear, your zeal for God, your delight in his worship, your gentleness, meekness, and kindness toward your fellow-creatures, your desire of their salvation, and readiness to deny yourselves for their good, they will be won to the belief of the same doctrines, and the practice of the same duties.

Is the gospel the word of life to your souls? Then, hold it fast; bind it to your hearts: take into your closets, and read it as your charter for eternal life; pray over it, till you feel it, till you are transformed into the image of Jesus; hold it forth in your lives; in your tempers; be ye the epistles of Christ known and read of all men

Let all the heathen writers join
To form one perfect book,
Great God, if once compared with thine,
How mean their writings look!

Not the most perfect rules they gave
Could show one sin forgiven,
Nor lead a step beyond the grave,
But thine conduct to heaven.

O send thy Spirit down to write
Thy law upon my heart!
Nor let my tongue indulge deceit,
Nor act the liar's part.

Order my footsteps by thy word,
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
And keep my conscience clear.

Make me to walk in thy commands
'Tis a delightful road;
Nor let my head, or heart, or hands,
Offend against my God.

Then shall I love thy gospel more,
And ne'er forget thy word,
When I have felt its quick'ning power
To draw me near the Lord.

In vain the proud deride me now;
I'll ne'er forget thy law,
Nor let that blessed gospel go
Whence all my hopes I draw.

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THE MORE CONVENIENT SEASON.

I REMEMBER once having gone from home to call upon a farmer's wife, in a neighbouring parish, in whose spiritual welfare I felt an interest. After conversing with her some time upon the great truths and blessings of the gospel, I prepared to take my leave, when she begged me to see a poor man, who lived not far distant, and who was in a dangerous state. I had been acquainted a few months before, with the man's mother: she was a poor widow, and lived in a mud cottage, on one of the extensive heaths in Dorsetshire; she was an ignorant and yet, I hope, a true Christian, who had never been possessed of great spiritual advantages, yet through the grace of God had learned that she was a sinner, and Christ Jesus the Saviour of sinners, and with that knowledge she was comforted, and in peace. Although she could not fully lay hold of and realize some of the great privileges of a Christian, yet, I believe she did, in much darkness, still cling to and rest upon the Rock of ages. Many a time have I been to that desolate cottage, to see and instruct the poor widow. She was past seventy years of age; there lived in the same cottage with her this son, his wife and child, and an half-idiot daughter, who took care of their aged mother. The house consisted of but two rooms, in one of which slept the poor widow and her daughter, while the rest of the family occupied the common sitting room.

Often have I opened the word of God with the little family around, and explained to them its blessed truths, and then we have knelt together in prayer to implore the saving influence of the Spirit of Christ. I cannot say that she ever exhibited the full fruits which mark advanced Christians: still, I trust, she leaned wholly upon the blood-shedding and atonement of her Saviour; and we know that none of those who touch but the hem of his garment shall be rejected. She had been dead some months, when I was requested to see the son. I left my horse at the gate, and went into the house. I found his wife and family in distress, fearing that ere long, he might be taken from them. After a few words with his wife, I went up stairs, for he occupied a different

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house from that he did during the lifetime of his mother There lay the sick man in great pain, in bed. He was quite sensible, and knew me at once. I spake to him of his soul; but "No!" said he, "it is too late. I have heard of Christ. I have read the tracts which you used to leave when you came to see my mother; but it is too late." I assured him of Christ's willingness to save all that came, even to the uttermost, and that whosoever comes to him, he will in no wise cast out. But he would not be comforted; he told me that he knew these things well, but that he could not pray; he felt no desire about his soul. I endeavoured to arouse him from this awful state by explaining to him his danger as a sinner: this he knew also; and although I urged him to flee from the wrath to come, it all produced no effect. He received no comfort; he seemed to have a certain looking for of fiery indignation, and yet not to be horrified at his situation. I told him that God's word assures us that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin; that whosoever believeth in him shall never perish, but have everlasting life. He remained unmoved; I asked him to try to join in prayer with me, and we knelt around his bed to implore mercy for his soul. While we were in prayer, he seemed to have increased difficulty in breathing, and this became greater and greater, so that we feared he would be choked; we arose, and scarcely had we risen from our knees, but his breathing ceased, and he lay a corpse—his soul had fled.

What a lesson does this teach us of the importance of true, vital religion. Reader, you may, like this poor man, have been possessed of religious advantages; you may have read many tracts, which have been left in your way; you may know something of Christ, but be assured that mere head knowledge will avail you nothing on a death-bed. If your religion is not a religion of the heart, there will be no hope in your death; you must not only know the truth, but receive it into your heart, and feed upon it there. Thousands heard our Lord's discourses and parables, and saw his miracles, who perished because they went no further; they were contented with a knowledge which availed not for their salvation.

Another lesson we have taught us is, the danger of delay. This poor man put off the affairs of his soul, to a more convenient season. Reader! do not you the like; that season

may never arrive; death may come to you as suddenly as it did to this poor man; for little did I expect, when I entered his chamber, that he was so near his end. Remember, it is often at such an hour as we think not, that death comes; and if you have no hope in Christ, death will come as an enemy to open the gate to never-ending misery.

Time is short; your glass may be nearly run out; but a few short years, or even months, or weeks, or days, may remain to you. And how do you intend spending them? Consider the value of your soul, and give up yourself, your body, soul and spirit, as a living sacrifice to your Saviour. A death-bed is not the fit time for preparation for eternity; you will need comfort then to enable you to bear the pains and afflictions of your body. Then begin at once to prepare to meet thy God. Delays are at all times dangerous, but never so full of evil as in religion. No one can delay without endangering the salvation of his soul. The Scripture says, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 2; and in no part of God's word will you find any promises of mercy to-morrow. They are all made to those who seek at once, and put not off to a more convenient season. We read of one who acted thus, when Paul preached, but we have no account of his conversion, and he died like thousands, we have every reason to fear, in his sins. See Acts xxiv. 25. Then, as you value your immortal soul, seek at once that you may find mercy with God, and grace to help you in all your time of need. God's word says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God," Psa. ix. 17; not only will the wicked, that is the notoriously profligate and abandoned sinners, but the forgetful, those who live as if there was no God, have no regard to him in their thoughts, words, or actions, shall be cast into hell. If, then, you are what the world would call "a good sort of person," naturally amiable and virtuous in your conduct, yet, if you forget God, if he is not in all your thoughts, you are not fit to die, you are not meet for heaven. A great change must take place in you: you must be born again, must be converted; that is, turned from self and the world, and your face be turned towards Zion, your affections in heaven, your hope beyond the grave, while you endeavour to serve God in word, thought, and deed. And this change must take place in your soul ere you can die happily. Then delay not; another year, and you may be in

eternity, and if not thus created anew, you must perish everlastingly.

But it may happen that this tract may fall into the hands of an open sinner, a sabbath-breaker, a swearer, a drunkard, or one of loose morals and conversation. Forget not what God's word says of you: "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," Rev. xxi. 8. Go at once, in deep penitence for your past sins, to that Saviour who died for you, and whose blood cleanseth from all sin, and will cleanse your soul, and whose righteousness will justify you. Go and seek at once the influence of the Spirit of Christ to renew you in the spirit of your mind, and you shall not be sent empty away. Sudden death is by no means uncommon. I heard once that a butcher, in the parish in which I lived, a profligate man, had been seized with a fit whilst intoxicated. I went to see him; but he was insensible, and so he remained till he died. You are not certain you shall not be laid low in a fit, or by some accident, and if you are unprepared, what hope can you have, for—

> There's no repentance in the grave,
> Nor pardon offer'd to the dead.

Seek mercy, while God prolongs the use of your faculties; and know that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. Yea, so willing is God to receive you, that he assures you, that whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out. And though your sins are red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow, through the cleansing influence of Christ's blood. God will blot them out of his book, and remember them no more for ever. Thus, being at peace with God, through faith in Christ, you will have nothing to fear; your death-bed will be one of peace, and you will be enabled to say at last—"Thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory, through Jesus Christ my Lord."

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A DYING THIEF AND A DYING SAVIOUR.

"And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—*Luke* xxiii. 33—35; 39—43.

THE writer of this tract has often prayed that he might die in peace upon his bed, surrounded by a few godly friends to pray with him, and cheer him by repeating some of the animating promises contained in the Bible. And he supposes that almost every pious person would wish to die in like manner; but, ah, what a different scene here presents itself to our eyes! Behold a dying thief, and a dying Saviour! Their situation is the most affecting that can be conceived; they are both in the agonies of death, but not in a silent chamber, or in the midst of sympathizing friends: no, they are on a mountain, nailed to a cross, surrounded by rude soldiers, and exposed to the gaze of the multitude who came, some from curiosity, and some from other motives, to see the crucifixion. At that time Jerusalem was filled with persons who had come from all parts of the country to celebrate the passover; and we have no idea of the numbers that would assemble to witness the scene, especially as Jesus was among the crucified. In the midst of these unfavourable circumstances, one of the most wonderful works was wrought that ever men or angels witnessed. Of this we shall have a better idea by directing our attention, first, to the DYING THIEF.

In some countries the thief is exiled, and in others put to death. The laws of God and man strongly condemn theft,

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and yet in every land the number of thieves is great. This is an affecting view of human nature, and shows us how dreadfully man has fallen from his original purity!

Some are thieves on a large, others on a smaller scale. The thief on the cross had violated the laws of his country, had been seized by the hand of justice, and was now suffering for his atrocious deeds.

To the time of his crucifixion, he had remained hardened and impenitent; no remorse had seized his guilty soul on account of the past, nor was he filled with fear respecting the future. In a few more hours he would be launched into eternity, yet he had no wish to prepare to meet his God. How alarming is such a state! How it ought to awaken our compassion for condemned malefactors!

This hardened criminal was not only impenitent when his sufferings commenced, but he insulted the Saviour after he was nailed to the cross. Two of the evangelists are very explicit on this point. Matthew says, "There were two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth," Matt. xxvii. 38—44. The evangelist Mark also says, "And they that were crucified with him reviled him." This discovers a depravity of no common order. Surely, the man who could sport with death, and insult the Saviour, whilst agonizing on the cross, is one of the last men we should expect to be saved; but mark the sovereignty and compassion of God! As his end approached, his heart softened; he began to pray; he called upon Christ for mercy. The deplorable circumstances of his body were favourable to the welfare of his soul; his peculiar situation brought him within sound of the Saviour's voice. It is not likely that he had ever seen Christ before, now he sees him, and hears him offer up that prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Now he hears him take leave of his mother: "Woman, behold thy son;" and he hears him commend her to the care and affection of a beloved

disciple: "Son, behold thy mother." Perhaps this might touch and melt his heart, or God might use some other means to lead him to repentance. Many poor unhappy men are not like this thief in the way of hearing of Christ, and mercy, and salvation. They are not in the habit of frequenting those places where Jesus is the theme. Alas! other subjects occupy their thoughts; they move in another circle; they keep aloof from the house of prayer. Nothing is more strange to their eyes than the pages of the Bible. Nothing is so harassing to the feelings of determined sinners as plain, faithful, pointed preaching, by which their very character is described, their consciences probed, and their sins plainly set before them. The minister who preaches such sermons will see a change in the face of a congregation in seven years. Some of the people will repent and believe, whilst others will withdraw from his ministry, and seek a doctrine more soothing. Hence there is a large portion of our fellow-creatures who never hear anything calculated to alarm them. Some method ought to be adopted for searching out poor abandoned creatures, who never hear the word of life. They have strong claims on our compassion; they are perishing for lack of knowledge. Many of them are brought up from their infancy to the trade of sinning. They are never applauded or caressed by their parents, except when they are expert in wickedness. Their duty to God and man has never been mentioned to them: they live only to steal, to kill, and to destroy. This being the case, what can we expect but that crimes will increase, offenders will multiply, our houses will be plundered, our cities polluted, and our jails filled? Senators may legislate, the vigilance of the police may increase, the judges condemn, and punishment be inflicted, but, if you would aim a blow at the root, O bring sinners to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world; he will give them a new heart and a right spirit, and then they leave the service of sin for ever!

Wherever there is true repentance, it brings forth fruit meet for repentance. This man's religion, though only the growth of one hour, was eminently fruitful. It produced many evidences of genuine discipleship; and, notwithstanding these evidences were only in miniature, still they are highly calculated to convince us that Christ saves no man *in* his sins, but *from* his sins. Let us notice them.

1. He made an open confession of his crime, and acknowledged the justice of his sentence.

2. He warned and reproved his fellow sinner. "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation: and we indeed justly?" It is as if he had said, Wilt thou continue hardened to the last? Dost thou not fear God, into whose presence thou wilt quickly enter? O consider thy latter end!

3. He vindicates the injured character of Christ. He declared, "This man hath done nothing amiss."

4. He professed his faith in the power and glory of Christ; presenting prayer to him, and acknowledging him both as Lord and King: "Lord," said he, "remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." This was a peculiar moment in the Saviour's history, and a moment in which the dying thief magnified him more than almost any other person then on earth. One of his disciples had betrayed him, another had denied him, and the rest forsook him and fled. The high priest and the scribes were vilifying him, the rabble were insulting him, whilst the poor penitent was addressing him as the great object of adoration, calling upon him for mercy, and pleading for a place in his kingdom. The contrast is striking and wonderful.

Let us now turn our thoughts to the DYING SAVIOUR.

What notice does He take of the thief who is hanging by his side? What answer does he give to his supplication? "Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This is exactly what might be expected from him whose heart is the dwelling-place of mercy. It contains,

1. An illustrious display of the readiness of Christ to answer prayer.

The poor trembling penitent is not kept in suspense a moment. It is as though Christ had elicited the prayer, in order to manifest the greatness of his mercy; to testify his willingness to save; to give every one who hereafter might read it encouragement to seek him, and to leave every impenitent sinner without excuse. Do you not see this? Then improve it to your everlasting welfare.

2. It gives a rich and comforting view of the plan of salvation.

When the pardon was granted to the suppliant, there were no reproaches with it, no reference to past ingratitude, or to old rebellion. It was a king's pardon, full and free.

We behold in it a beautiful illustration of that verse, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." It was like the poisoned Israelite, who cast his dying eye to the brazen serpent, and immediately received a cure. It cuts up by the root all pretensions to heaven by human merit, and confirms the truth of the gospel, that salvation is a gift: that, although heaven is a purchased inheritance, yet it is not bought with works of righteousness which we have done, but by the precious blood of Christ, and by him freely offered and freely given to every seeking soul.

3. It affords a wonderful proof of the Saviour's power. He snatched a sinner out of the hands of the wicked one when his own hands were fastened to the cross. He conquered death on the frontiers of his own territory. He gave eternal life when he himself was dying. He disposed of a kingdom when he was suffering as a malefactor; and, as a conqueror, he took one of the trophies of his victory with him to paradise. Blessed Jesus! Mighty Lord! what feeble mortal need to be afraid to trust his soul with thee?

4. It gives us an idea how quickly God can prepare a soul for heaven.

"To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." It was then within a few hours of sunset, when the Jewish day ended, and yet he would be ready! The grace of God in his heart was of rapid growth; it soon came to maturity. The faint beams of light were quickly changed into perfect day! Oh, how sudden was the transition from a cross to a crown; from suffering to glory; from the confines of hell to the joys of heaven! How must the celestial city have rung with acclamations at this work of omnipotence! How must hell have raged at beholding one who seemed so near the flames suddenly snatched away, and in a few hours admitted into paradise! Who, when considering this fact, will ever think anything too hard for the Lord?

5. It is a confirmation of that delightful truth, that at death the souls of believers do immediately pass into glory; absent from the body, and present with the Lord. Here is no undefined number of days, or weeks, or years, during which the soul must remain in some middle state, in order to be purified. No; he had been a great sinner, yet he needed only the blood of Christ to be applied to his heart, in order to cleanse him from all sin. Though he knew nothing of Christ before, yet he did not seek for any one to

introduce him; he went to Jesus direct, and his success was glorious. While the New Testament is extant, this part of his conduct will be for an example, and his success will be a guarantee that none shall seek the Lord in vain. Hallelujah!

Let us apply this subject, and observe,

1. All the good which is in man is the work of God

At the moment when the Lord Jesus was pardoning one sinner, and cheering him with a promise of paradise, there was another sinner equally near to him, dying in all his guilt and misery. He does not heave a sigh; he does not shed a tear; he does not lift up one petition; he continues like a rock of ice—cold, unfeeling, and impenetrable. Awful state! what can remain for him but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish? A sinner dying impenitent! Why does not he apply to Christ, like the other? To what power are we to ascribe the difference? Before the crucifixion, they were hardened; yea, after they hung upon the cross, they both reviled Christ. Who made them to differ? Who softened the heart, awakened the fears, and drew forth the supplications of one of them? Was it Satan? Was it his fellow-sinner? Was it the reproaches of the multitude? Oh, no! it was the softening, enlightening, sanctifying grace of God; and, were it not for the same grace, there never would be a sinner converted; we should all live and die in our rebellion. "Ye will not come to me," said Christ: there is a fixed enmity against God in every breast; it requires the power of Jehovah to make a sinner willing to be saved; it requires the arm of the Almighty to draw a sinner to Christ. Oh! except God pity us, and change our hearts, our state is desperate. Be thankful, reader, that you are not in the bottomless pit. Be thankful if you feel any desire after the Saviour. View it as a token for good. Watch over it; cherish it; do everything which God has appointed for strengthening it. The feeble commencement of it is the work of God; therefore hope and strive for its perfection.

2. While life remains there is hope.

Some men's cases appear very hopeless; but they cannot be more hopeless than this man's was. No sinner is beyond the reach of God's mercy; therefore means should be used with all classes to lead them to repentance. If you can have access to a condemned malefactor in his cell, go, visit him, remind him of his sin, warn him of his danger, exhort him to look unto Jesus, who is able to save unto the uttermost.

If you gain admission to the dying bed of some pharisee, warn him also; and, though there is as little hope of him as of a dying thief, yet plead with him, strive to get at his conscience, strip off the fancied righteousness in which he is trusting, and open to him the chambers of imagery which lie concealed in his deceitful and desperately wicked heart. If you cannot draw him from himself, alarm him with the apprehensions of approaching ruin. Set in array against him all the terrors of the Lord. Beseech him in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God; at any rate, endeavour to bring the sinner to the footstool of mercy.

3. Sinners must repent, or perish.

Perhaps this may reach the eye or ear of some condemned criminal; and will it not encourage thee, O wretched man, to read of a dying thief obtaining mercy? His sins brought him to the cross; there he repented, and the Saviour took him to heaven. Your sins have brought you to prison and to judgment; quickly they may bring you to the gallows; and, if you do not repent, they will take you to hell. Then follows eternity, the judgment-seat, the quenchless flame! O sinner, make haste and seek forgiveness. Now the door of mercy is open. Now the Saviour bends his ear, and waits for your requests. Now there is hope; but in a few days, perhaps a few hours, thy day of grace may be ended. Embrace, I beseech thee, the last and only hope of a sinner. Turn to the Lord; confess thy sins; make restitution to those whom thou hast injured, if it be in thy power; cry earnestly to God for mercy; place thy expectation of forgiveness entirely on the merits of Jesus. If heaven can be obtained only by works, then it is over, thou canst not obtain it; but, if it be freely given to those who trust in Christ, then thou hast hope. O hasten to Christ!

4. It is exceedingly dangerous and sinful to put off the concerns of the soul to a dying day.

Some will be tempted to abuse this very subject to their eternal ruin. "What!" they say, "have you not heard how Christ pardoned the thief on the cross? He obtained mercy at last, and why should not we?—why should we be in any hurry?—why may not we go on a little longer in the pleasures of the world?" Why? we will tell you why. There were two thieves crucified with Christ, and one of them died as he had lived; and, if you neglect the great salvation now, it is more probable that you will die like the impenitent than like the penitent.

There is *one* instance recorded that none might despair, and *only* one, that none might presume. Consider these things seriously. We do not ask, Are you thieves, or liars, or sabbath-breakers? We hope you are not. Neither do we ask, Are you drunkards, or swearers, or adulterers, or fornicators? We hope you are not. But you may be free from all these gross crimes, and yet in the high road to perdition; living without God and without hope; swallowed up in the ways of the world, and disregarding the only way which leads to heaven. Are you aware of your state? Has any friend warned you of your sinful condition? Has any one instructed you in your duty towards Christ? He demands your heart. Faith in his name will save your soul. Away with all your vain pretensions, and come to him as a guilty creature who has nothing, seeking help from him who has all things. You must be saved in the same way as the dying thief, or you cannot be saved at all. He asked, and received. He believed, and was saved. He trusted, and was not confounded.

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

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THE HEIRS OF GLORY

A GENTLEMAN having come to the possession of an estate, invited a friend from a distance, to partake of his hospitality, and to congratulate him on the acquisition of his possessions. The friend was a christian; but the proprietor of the domain sought his happiness in this world's enjoyments. Soon after the arrival of the guest, he was led out to a balcony, commanding an extensive view. Pointing forward, the proprietor asked, "Do you see that range of fields extending to the verge of yonder hill?" "I do," was the reply. "Then—these are mine. Look again," he continued, "in this other direction. Do you see these farm houses, and adjacent fields?" His friend assented as before—"These again," he cried, in the joy of his heart, "are mine." Having gone over, in description, the whole of his property, he awaited the usual congratulations, but received none. On expressing his surprise, mingled with displeasure, his companion, who saw in these things the idol which had taken possession of his heart, and the rock on which his soul was being destroyed, gently replied, "Why should you be surprised? look to yonder village: there lives a peasant, who can say more than you have said to-day." The gentleman exclaimed with astonishment, "What can he say?" It was answered, "He can look up, and ask, Do you see yon sky? above that sky is the heaven of heavens, that heaven of heavens is mine. Again, he can look beyond this world, over the narrow verge of time, to a vast eternity, and can say, That eternity is mine. But, more, this disciple of the Lord Jesus, can bid you look around, and, asking you to behold the finger-marks of Him who created all things, he can add, with joy unspeakable, The God who made all those things is mine. And, when your property is burnt up in one vast conflagration, his shall endure for ever, and be enjoyed in blissful immortality."

But who, it is asked, are those who are permitted by the

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Lord of the universe to adopt such language? to lay claim to so glorious an inheritance? who are they?—Those and those only, who are "born again of the Spirit;" who have been "reconciled unto God" through faith in the atoning blood of Jesus; who are pressing after complete conformity to the will of God. Oh! happy beyond expression, are those who can thus "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," and who, having received the "earnest of the Spirit," are not only "looking for," but also, by a holy life and conversation, "hasting to" the coming of the Lord.

Reader, what say you? You are verging every moment to that world where your state shall be fixed for ever, either to bow your head in heaven, or gnash your teeth in hell. To which of those regions is your course tending? Nay! do not give a general answer, do not put off your soul with what you hope to be at some future time. But the question is: Were you now, even now, introduced into eternity, where, where, according to the word of God, would you spend it? If you are walking in the light of God's countenance, having your heart sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus, you will indeed be able, with some degree of well-grounded confidence, to look forward to the "King in his beauty," and to the land of glory, yet afar off. But if you are walking in darkness, your answer will most probably be, "I do not know," for our Saviour saith, "He that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth."

Every man feels that there is in him a principle of immortality, a something which mocks every attempt to fix down the mind exclusively to present things, a something which bounds away from creation, or rather from present possession, and stretches forward to an endless futurity. By the law of his existence, he must think of the future; though that future to very many, is bounded by this uncertain fleeting world; which like a high wall, prevents the eye from penetrating beyond its limits. But when, by the forcible statement of revealed truth, the death of a friend, or other means, the unrenewed mind is compelled to think of what is beyond the grave; and to perceive, that sooner or later, it must cross the boundaries of both worlds, and take its place somewhere in the regions of eternity; then it is, that the principle of hope too frequently comes forward

to its aid, not as a friend, but as a deceiver. False hope arrays heaven, as the heathens do their gods, in colours to please the predominant passion. False hope levels all difficulties to the mind, and sweeps away all those barriers, which the word of God has placed between the finally unconverted soul, and the enjoyment of glory. In a word, false hope throws open the gates of her heaven, and presents there a paradise of imaginary pleasure, a series of enjoyments, in which "fellowship with God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ" are as effectually excluded, as if they had no existence.

We speak of mohammedans, and of their delusions in regard to heaven, and how these suit the depraved desires of the natural mind; but in the very centre of christian privileges, what numbers are there whose views and expectations of heaven are essentially the same as those of the deluded followers of the false prophet! Heaven! O calumniated place! How misunderstood! This, this is written above thy gates by the pen of thy almighty Builder, "EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE, HE CANNOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!" But, ah! how few so believe it, as to let go their grasp of this world, and flee to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only way, the only door into its endless blessedness! How many speak of going there, while that God who is the glory of heaven, and that Saviour whose praise is the very music of heaven, are fearfully neglected! They have no enjoyment in spiritual exercises, no earnest longings after holiness of heart and life, and no pleasure in the company of those who delight in fellowship with God; and yet they speak of "going to heaven!" Oh vain delusion! The heaven they dream of exists no where but in their own corrupt and deceived imaginations. It is but a phantom, created by the wicked one to keep their minds at rest, while they are neglecting the great salvation; and are remaining still "unreconciled" to that God, whose smile is heaven, and in whose presence is indeed "fulness of joy," and "pleasures for evermore."

Believe it reader, that if you could visit the mansions in glory, without first having been taught by the Spirit of Christ, to find your happiness in intercourse with him, you would find yourself there, a solitary being, far removed from your native element, and from those earthly gratifications and selfish

delights, which alone could afford pleasure to the craving desires of your unrenewed mind. The love of money, of honour, of sinful pleasure, would find there nothing congenial to it. Forgetfulness of the true God, so essential in this world to your delusive ease and comfort, would day and night, without ceasing, be disturbed by the praises of One to whom you had been a stranger; and by the company of those, whose happiness and pursuits, while on earth, were either altogether despised, or which had only called forth in you a feeble, wretched, outward imitation.

Why then, will you speak of "going to heaven," without instantly seeking, with all your heart and soul, that change which must be effected in all who enter that holy abode? Reader, while you may be framing your excuse, and vainly looking forward to a future season for conversion, life is fleeting away, and every hour is hurrying you down to the grave, as on the surface of a mighty river. And, oh! if you die without union to Jesus, where will you find a refuge? In this world there can be none: it will soon be burned up. Heaven, too, will be found shut to all who have not the image of the Lamb of God. Where can you then go in such fearful circumstances? There is but one place left, and that without choice, even the region of everlasting darkness, blackness, and despair. There you must go, unless you are converted to God. And would you but retire for a little from the bustle of life, even now, and listen to the still small voice of Heaven, of conscience, and of experience, you would come to your right mind, you would go to the Father of the Lord Jesus; and would speedily find in Christ a blessed haven of eternal rest. But no! it may be, sin still hurries you on, while the voice from Calvary, is yet proclaiming in your ears, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?"

Reader, all sensual conceptions of heaven in your mind, must now or in eternity flee away. Heaven must be begun below in all those who shall enjoy its perfection above. Heaven is a place of character, the full developement of those principles and dispositions which are received and cherished on earth, by the knowledge of Jesus and the teaching of his Spirit. No child on its first introduction to a school, is placed in the highest class, but in one or other of the lowest; where the first elements of the future educa-

tion are imparted, and the necessary groundwork is laid for the more matured instructions which successively follow; the one must precede the other. And so of the preparation for heaven. The lowest school of Christ is in this world; where, like Mary of old, his disciples sit at his feet, and commence, through his Spirit, the attainment of that knowledge which shall be expanded and matured in the realms above. But whatever is the distance between the lower and the upper sanctuary, between Mary's place in Bethany, and those high walks in glory where the redeemed shall follow the Lamb, and listen with enraptured delight to his instructions, let it never be forgotten that there is an unalterable connexion between them: as much so, and as absolutely essential, as between the bud and blossom of a tree, and the fruit which is to follow; or between the state of infancy and that of full-grown manhood; the first, of necessity, going before the other. As well, therefore, might we look for the state of manhood, without the previous stages of infancy, childhood, and youth; as well might we expect to reap the fruit from any tree where no buds and blossoms were previously to be found, as to expect admission into heaven without being first "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works," and made to possess the tempers, learn the principles, and imbibe the dispositions of its blessed inhabitants; while, like them, we seek our happiness from that "river of joy" which "waters the city of our God."

So far it can be declared to you what heaven is. But oh! who can describe, who can tell the glory of that bright world? It is a subject entirely beyond the power of words. An apostle, skilled in every form of expression, accustomed to subjects and themes of the loftiest kind, was caught up to the third heaven to obtain from his vantage ground, a glimpse of its realities; and when he descended, what was the amount of the information communicated to his brethren below? even this, that no language was adequate to tell what he had seen: yea, in the very spirit of inspiration, he declared it "unutterable!" Then surely no language can describe the madness of those who regard not the promised inheritance: and for what do they disregard it? they cannot tell; a passing show, a momentary excitement; where all is vanity and vexation of

spirit. For what are all the concerns below, but like the scenes acted on a stage, which quickly pass away, and the fashion of them perishes.

When men are in full and successful pursuit of this world's enjoyments, or of that which is created, and suddenly get a sight of death and of the grave in the midst of their career, what a sad feeling comes across their minds! They then see these things, if they do not perversely shut their eyes, as but "whited sepulchres," where the outward mockery of beauty only adds to the bitterness of the discovery, that, away from God, they are full of corruption, and cannot become truly happy. For that misnamed happiness which the world pants to enjoy, is no reality; it leaves no strength and peace behind it, but the reverse. It is not like the waters of the Nile which overflow the land of Egypt, and leave, when they are gone, the germs of beauty and fertility to bud and blossom, and cheer the heart of man; but, on the contrary, it produces a miserable sinking of the spirit, as if it had been grasping a shadow: while Satan contrives to keep the mind from discovering the true sources of the disappointment, by diverting the attention from subject to subject, from anxiety to anxiety; so that many, very many, pause not to think of their folly and delusion, till they see the grave opening wide to receive them.

Awake then, O reader, if you are yet a stranger to the peace of God through Jesus Christ, and to that holiness of heart and life which characterises every one who has fled to the Redeemer. Arise! shake yourself from the dust; set your face Zionward; and, as you advance in your way through the wilderness of this world, lean upon the arm of Jesus, and trust to his finished righteousness alone: so shall the light of heaven shine brighter and brighter into your soul "till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your heart," and the shadows of this transitory world shall have for ever fled away.

Behold some of Zion's travellers near the close of their journey. They have long felt themselves "pilgrims and strangers," looking on every place below, however attractive, as far from home; and bearing patiently the trials of the way, for it is the way to glory. Now they are entering heaven with this exclamation, "We have waited

for thy salvation, O God." Who can tell the scenes of created and uncreated beauty which now meet their view! or conceive of the welcome which simultaneously bursts on them from every quarter in that happy land! But while we own the impossibility of this, let it never be forgotten, that it is the presence of Jesus which consummates their every wish, and crowns their every enjoyment. They knew him, and delighted to acknowledge him as their Friend, in the world below; and he now delights to acknowledge them to be his friends before the presence of his Father and his holy angels.

And now, reader, would you enter Emmanuel's land, and everlastingly partake of his blessedness, O "acquaint yourself with him." Visit his cross as a perishing, helpless sinner: inquire into the love which brought him there to open for you a passage into glory; till freed from the burden of your guilt through his precious blood, and filled with a peace which passeth all understanding, you are "changed into his image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

But, if you are of that unhappy number who "neglect the great salvation," and put it off to a "more convenient season," remember and tremble, that ere another warning or invitation is given, your soul may be hurried unprepared into the presence of God; and be cast "into the fire which never shall be quenched." Oh! be not like that infatuated monarch of old, against whom a conspiracy was formed, and who being warned by a friend, in the midst of a banquet, that the letter he gave him contained "serious things," replied, in the madness of his folly, "Serious things to-morrow," and, rejecting the warning, perished the same night by the hands of the conspirators.

"Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 6.

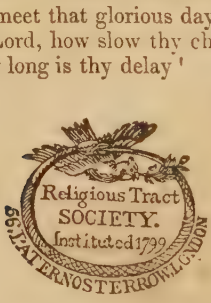
"Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. vi. 2.

"To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts," Heb. iii., 7 8

O HAPPY soul that lives on high
While men lie grovelling here!
His hopes are fix'd above the sky,
And faith forbids his fear.
His conscience knows no secret stings,
While grace and joy combine
To form a life, whose holy springs
Are hidden and divine.

He waits in secret on his God;
His God in secret sees;
Let earth be all in arms abroad,
He dwells in heavenly peace;
His pleasures rise from things unseen,
Beyond this world and time,
Where neither eyes, nor ears, have been,
Nor thoughts of mortals climb.

He wants no pomp, nor royal throne,
To raise his figure here;
Content, and pleas'd to live unknown,
Till Christ his life appear;
He looks to heaven's eternal hills,
To meet that glorious day;
Dear Lord, how slow thy chariot wheels!
How long is thy delay!



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HE IS GONE!

SOME THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE FACT,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE WHO ARE LEFT TO MOURN.

[This tract is suitable to be given to those who surround a death-bed, or at funerals.]

THE title of this tract does but obscurely hint at its subject. "*He is gone!*" is an expression which may be used with a variety of meanings, and on very different occasions. It may be said of one who has set sail on a voyage to some remote part of the globe, or of one who has started on a journey to some distant place. Perhaps this is the very phrase you employed, when the friend who had been paying you a visit, left your house and returned to the place of his own residence. You saw him off, you accompanied him a little way, and then you came back to your family and said, "He is gone." There is, however, another case to which this language is as applicable as to any of those which I have mentioned, and one in which it is as frequently employed. "He is gone," is the very form of words in which men commonly speak of the death of a fellow-mortal; and it is a very significant mode of communicating that affecting intelligence. Reader, especially if you are a mourner, let me lead your thoughts for a few minutes into the channel which my own have sometimes been carried into when it has been said to me, of one and another whose welfare I have inquired after, *He is gone.*

You may have heard this exclamation, and perhaps uttered it at the foot of the bed on which lies the lifeless body of the individual whose death is lamented: but *he*, the husband, father, brother, neighbour, or whatever relation he sustained, *he* is not there, *he is gone.* He hears no voice, he sees no tears, he is insensible to the kiss imprinted on the

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cold damp forehead; it is not *he*, for *he* is not in the flesh, *He is gone*. So, then, the body was not *the man*, it was but his temporary habitation. It has fallen, and lies in ruins, deserted by the living and intelligent mind which once dwelt in it. Here let us recognise a fact of great importance. "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding," Job xxxii. 8. That spirit, and the body it inhabits, are perfectly distinct; and, however intimate their union, while it lasts, no two things can be more dissimilar in the elements and properties of their nature. The body perishes and returns to dust, for it was originally dust, Gen. iii. 19; the spirit, or soul, is essentially a living thing: it is not dead, neither doth it sleep: it is "absent from the body," 2 Cor. v. 8. *It is gone.*

I need not ask you, then, which is the *more worthy* of your attention and solicitude, *that*, the end of which you see when you "bury your dead out of your sight," Gen. xxiii. 4, or *that* which then exists apart, in the full possession of all its powers, a living, conscious, intelligent, immortal creature? But I may ask, to which is *your* first care directed? Which gives you most anxiety and occupation? Is it not the perishing body? Are not your daily thoughts and inquiries, "What shall we eat? What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" Matt. vi. 31. The whole earthly existence of many is spent in making provision for the flesh, while the soul, which takes upon itself all this trouble, employs none of its careful thoughts upon its own interests. What a degradation to its nature,—to make it the mere drudge and slave of the body, which ought to be under its command! You would think it a proof of surprising folly in a man, to busy himself, and spend his property in beautifying and furnishing a house which he held by a short and uncertain tenure, and which he might be compelled to quit at a moment's notice; especially if he thus exhausted all his resources, and left no means of providing himself with another abode. What, then, is to be thought of your conduct, if you are spending your days in labouring for the ease, and comfort, and indulgence of the flesh, and neglecting the welfare of your soul, which death will soon, and perhaps without warning, dislodge from its present dwelling-place, and compel to seek another home

Let us take another suggestion from these familiar words—*He is gone!* WHITHER *has he gone?* Who can tell us where his present habitation is? What may be the nature of his present occupations? What the character of the society with which he mingles? Has he, after the toils and troubles of *this world*, found, at length, a place of rest in *that world*, for which he has exchanged it, or is he a greater stranger to repose than ever? Has he entered into the possession of an "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," 1 Pet. i. 4, or has he found his eternal abode in a region of pain and woe, where not a single ray of hope can reach him? Does he feel his existence to be a blessing of unspeakable value, or is he tormented with the bitter reflection, that, "it had been good for him if he had never been born?" Matt. xxvi. 24. In a word, is he in heaven, or in hell? It is certain that he is in one or the other. The Bible (the only authority to which we can appeal) determines this point. It does not tell us *directly* whether the departed spirit has ascended to the habitation of the just, or has gone down to the gates of everlasting death. But it answers our inquiry, by assuring us, that he that repenteth and believeth, shall be saved, while all who remain in impenitence and unbelief shall perish, Luke xiii. 3; that "he that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life;" while "he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 16. 36. With regard to the departed, whose mortal remains you are about to commit, or have committed to the grave, this, too, is certain; that, whatever may be his or her doom, it is irrevocable; whatever the present state, it is fixed for ever. How then, you may ask, can we answer the question which so naturally presents itself?—Answer it not at all: be dumb, and open not your mouth, Lev. x. 3; Ps. xxxix. 9. Drop the question for another, and, instead of asking—Where is *he?* let the inquiry be—

WHITHER AM I GOING?

It is plain you are going hence, "for here have we no continuing city," Heb. xiii. 14. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. As you have followed the bodies of your kindred, or your neighbours to

the grave, so will surviving friends, ere long, perform the same office for yours, and consign it to the silent earth. And when some who miss you, where they are now wont to meet you, shall inquire the cause of your absence, it shall be said of *you*, as you now say of another—*He is gone!*

Take the Bible in your hand, and propose this question—What will be the termination of my journey? Open the sacred volume, and it will show you the way of life, and the way of death. Consult it diligently, read it attentively; read it with self-application and prayer; earnestly seek the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and you will soon see in which of these ways you are walking; you will perceive that you are either with the many, in the broad way which leadeth to destruction, or with the comparatively few, in the narrow way which leadeth unto life eternal, Matt. vii. 13, 14.

It may be, you are unwilling to enter upon this inquiry. What is the ground of your reluctance? Many reasons are usually advanced in justification of the common neglect with which this subject is treated. Every one finds, or thinks he finds, in the peculiarities of *his* situation, something to extenuate, at least, the sin and folly of neglecting it. Reader, it is probable you think there are circumstances in *your* case that may be fairly advanced to excuse your conduct for having hitherto put off the consideration of the question now urged upon you; but, whatever these may be, let me beg you to press yourself with the question, whether it is not the fact, that a serious application to the subject is avoided, from an apprehension that it may lead to an unwelcome discovery? If you had no secret misgiving, you would not shrink from examining into this matter. If you really believed that you should find all right, you would be glad to confirm yourself in such a delightful conviction, by the high sanction and authority of the word of God. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God," John iii. 21. He delights in the evidence thus afforded him, that his character is that of a child of God. He comes to the standard of Divine truth,—the revelation of God's mind and will, that he may refresh and animate himself by reading there, that evidence, without which the fact of his being in a safe state, can never be made clear to him; and that he may discover if in any degree he has stepped aside, or inclined towards any crooked way.

Suppose the sad fact made clear, that you are in that path which leads down to everlasting misery — what is the consequence of this discovery? Your peace of mind is disturbed; but that peace which springs from ignorance of your situation, is a false peace; it is a mercy for such peace to be broken. It makes you positively unhappy; so it should; there is nothing more affecting and distressing to the mind of a christian, than to see men pursuing their own destruction with as much thoughtlessness and merriment as if they were going to a festival; for a calamity is greatly aggravated when it comes suddenly upon those who are dreaming of nothing but pleasure. The discovery of your true state makes your heart heavy, and causes some tears to flow in secret, and makes you anxious upon points which till now never gave you any concern, and you find yourself frequently saying, with a troubled breast, "How can I escape?" "Whither can I flee from the wrath to come?" I have supposed you brought to this disquietude and anxiety about your soul, by a discovery, through the reading,—the careful reading of the Bible, that your soul is in a state of the greatest danger, that your steps are taking hold on death and hell. Now, if it should be as I have supposed, if you are proposing the great question, "What must I do to be saved?" Acts xvi. 30, the Bible, the very book which has put you on this momentous inquiry, is ready with an answer. It has disclosed your danger for the very purpose of gaining your attention to what it has to say concerning the way of life. It tells a sinner he is going to hell, that it may induce him to pause and listen, while it opens to him the Divine plan of recovering mercy. If you stop in your present course, and seriously apply yourself to the great matter of your soul's salvation, you will find that for *you*, how far soever you may have gone in the way of sin, there is "a door of hope:" that door is Jesus Christ, John x. 9. It is open to every penitent. To enter, is to *believe on the Son of God*, to seek pardon through the merits of his precious blood; and, mark the promise, the promise of the Lord Jesus himself, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out," John vi. 37. All who *are* walking in the way of life have entered it by *this door;* they have come to Christ, and through faith in him, have obtained "peace with God," Rom. v. 1. These are travelling to the good land which God has promised to

his people. They have trials in the way, but they have abundant consolations, 2 Cor. i. 5; they have difficulties to encounter, but strength is given them equal to their day, 2 Cor. xii. 9. They have adversaries to combat, but the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ can make them equal in the strife to their strongest enemies, so that the weakest of their number can wrestle with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and with spiritual wickedness in high places: and in the end shall be made more than conquerors, through him that has loved them, Ephes. vi. 12; Rom. viii. 37. Even over death, their last enemy, they triumph; and in the conflict they have often been heard to shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. xv. 55—57. They draw their last breath in peace, and *they are gone.* But we know whither they are gone; and those that loved them most, cannot deliberately wish them back, for they have entered into the joy of their Lord, Matt. xxv. 21. We *may* indulge, with moderation, the feelings of nature, in mourning over the loss *we* have sustained, but we must "not sorrow as others which have no hope," 1 Thess. iv. 13; for our loss, though great, is as nothing in comparison with their gain. Our loss can be estimated, but their gain is too vast to be conceived. Our loss is but for a season, for we also must soon go hence; but their gain is eternal, for they are safe in the heavenly fold.—

> "Blessed fold! no foe can enter,
> And no friend departeth thence;
> Jesus is their Sun, their centre,
> And their Shield, Omnipotence."

Reader, it is the earnest prayer of him who has written this tract, that you may be a "follower of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises," Heb. vi. 12. It is with this object in view, that it is pressed upon you to consider where you now are,—which way your face is set,—whether your present path is leading you to eternal life, or eternal death. O that you would question yourself seriously and faithfully on this subject. Nothing is entitled to a moment's consideration while this is neglected; "for what is a

man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt. xvi. 26. Suffer the word of exhortation;—meditate on these things; arise and flee, through Christ, to the footstool of a pardoning God. Lose no time, for soon "the eye which saw you, shall see you no more; neither shall your place any more behold you," Job xx. 9; vii. 10. If any seek you there, they will find that *you* too *are gone*.

DEATH OF A BELIEVER.

In vain my fancy strives to paint
The moment after death,
The glories that surround the saint
When yielding up his breath.

One gentle sigh his fetters breaks,
We scarce can say "He's gone!"
Before the willing spirit takes
Her station near the throne.

Faith strives, but all its efforts fail,
To trace her heavenward flight;
No eye can pierce within the veil
Which hides that world of light.

Thus much (and this is all) we know,
They are supremely blest;
Have done with sin, and care, and woe,
And with their Saviour rest.

On harps of gold his name they praise,
His presence always view;
And, if we here their footsteps trace,
There we shall praise Him too.

THE TOLLING BELL.

Oft as the bell, with solemn toll,
Speaks the departure of a soul,
Let each one ask himself, "Am I
Prepar'd, should I be call'd, to die?"

Only this frail and fleeting breath
Preserves me from the jaws of death;
Soon as it fails, at once I'm gone,
And plung'd into a world unknown.

Then, leaving all I lov'd below,
To God's tribunal I must go;
Must hear the Judge pronounce my fate,
And fix my everlasting state.

But, could I bear to hear him say,
"Depart, accursed, far away!
With Satan, in the lowest hell,
Thou art for ever doom'd to dwell."

Lord Jesus! help me now to flee,
And seek my hope alone in thee;
Apply thy blood, thy Spirit give,
Subdue my sin, and let me live.

Then, when the solemn bell I hear,
If sav'd from guilt, I need not fear;
Nor would the thought distressing be,
"Perhaps it next may toll for me."

Rather, my spirit would rejoice;
And long, and wish, to hear thy voice;
Glad when it bids me earth resign,
Secure of heaven, if thou art mine.

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SHALL WE MEET IN HEAVEN?

My Respected Neighbours,

A lady who is filling an important station, was once on a visit in the North of England, and when she was about to take leave, the friend at whose house she was staying, said to her: "Now my dear you are going—perhaps we shall not meet again on earth—do you think we shall meet in Heaven? *I fear we shall not*, except a great and happy change take place in your heart. You are not prepared for Heaven! O, I beseech you not to neglect it another hour." This word was like a thunderbolt. It entered into her soul. She retired to her chamber—shut the door—kneeled down, and cried for mercy. Her prayer was heard, and the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, gave her that peace which passeth all understanding. She retained her vivacity, her cheerfulness, and her energy, but from this day it was all devoted to God.

Now my respected neighbours, *I wish to meet you all in Heaven.* Some of you, I doubt not, are on the way to that happy world, but others of you I fear are neglecting your precious souls. I have been a long time with you, and perhaps, may soon be called to give an account of my stewardship, therefore, permit me with prayerful solicitude for your happiness to press on your attention the contents of this letter, I do it in the prospect of meeting you before the judgment seat of Christ, where I hope to see you placed at his right hand.

This letter will be addressed to *five* different classes.

I.—To *those who attend the ministry of the word, and have derived advantage from it.*

I bless God on your behalf, and pray that you may be preserved blameless unto the end of life. Remember that God has done great things for you, and great things are expected

from you. Walk circumspectly towards those who are not religious. Try to do them good. Kindness will find its way to every heart. Keep before your eyes that saying of the apostle, "*He who converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.*" A soul saved is a world gained. O try to do good to souls, and if but one soul is benefitted through your agency, it will call forth your praises to God for ever. *Often think of souls being lost*, dwelling for ever in hell, the fearful companions of the devil and his angels,—and let this cause you to try to prevent their ruin. *Consider how many drunkards there are in your neighbourhood*, and if one of them dies a drunkard, he will be shut up in hell. O try to reclaim the drunkard. *Think how many people are in the habit of telling lies;* and no liar can be admitted into Heaven. Try by every tender and affectionate method to bring them to repentance. You know that the Lord Jesus Christ is mighty to save. Has he not saved you? And have you not an evidence in your own experience that he is able to save unto the uttermost? Then warn, and invite, and encourage all around you to look unto Jesus for a present salvation—a salvation from their sins, and let the very manner in which you do it prove that you love them. Try various methods. If one fails, try another, One tract may save a soul. One remark may lead a sinner to repentance. Therefore I call on you as the friends of Christ, to be "steadfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

II.—To *those who attend the ministry of the word, and are not yet converted.*

There were multitudes of Jews in ancient times, who regularly attended the Temple—but they had no real religion, and God charges them with it, saying, "This people cometh before me as my people, and they sit before me as my people sit: and they hear my word—but their heart goeth after their covetousness." The heart-searching God saw that all was wrong.

So there were many Scribes and Pharisees, who were remarkable for their strict observance of religious duties, concerning whom Christ says, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven." How alarming must their state be?

So there are many who attend Christian ordinances, and are very moral and upright in their conduct, and also do many pious and benevolent actions,—but still their hearts are

unchanged. They have neither love to Christ, nor faith in Christ. Now how dreadful will it be with you, if you should be of this number and continue so!

It is said that the Hindoos wear a mark on their forehead to shew what god they worship. Oh how you would be alarmed at yourselves, if the Almighty was to write on your foreheads—"*These people do not worship me! This man is not a servant of Jesus Christ! This woman is not going to heaven!*" Now although this is not visible written on your foreheads, yet it is true: yes, your own consciences bear witness against you. There is a solemn monitor in your own bosoms who says, "*all is not right*;" and why do you not hearken to this voice *within*, and to the call without, and seek the Lord while he may be found? You have slighted the offers of mercy too long already, do not add to this sin by neglecting it another hour. The Holy Ghost saith, "To-day if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts." "To-day," the Saviour says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." O resist him no longer, but embrace him as your Redeemer, and your all.

Here I would say a word to *the young people*. Perhaps, my dear young friends, the conduct of older people may have proved a stumbling block to some of you, and have prevented you from coming to a decision as the followers of Christ. Many have been injured in this way, and perhaps you have also. But now I warn you. Look away from such persons, and consult the last two verses of the tenth chapter of Luke; "Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." Imitate her example, and you shall be her companions in glory. And I must not pass over the *scholars in our schools*. My dear children, your advantages are very great, and where much is given much will be required, Take heed that you do not trifle with such sacred instructions—The sun that softens the wax, hardens the clay—and if your instructions do not soften your heart, what will be the consequence? Some of the most religious people in the world were trained in schools like yours. Our churches are continually receiving numbers from Sunday schools, but how few of you have given us that delight which we are expecting! There is one Sunday school in the West of England, which has been honoured to send forth ten persons into places of great importance as Teachers, and Preachers. O shall I ever hear of any of you being so employed? Think of it my dear children. Lay it to heart. Give up yourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, now in your early days, who can tell what happy and useful persons you may become? Parents! will you second these endeavours to do your children good? Much remains with you. O follow it up both by prayer, precept, and example!

III.—To *those who once attended the ministry of the word, but now neglect it.*

In a free country like England, people have a right to go to what place of worship they please—but alas! there are great numbers who neither go to Church nor Chapel. What an example for their children! Such people are sinning with both hands. With one hand they are fighting against their Creator, and with the other they are making a trap for their children's souls. I have known many of this character brought to see their folly, and their danger, and who have afterwards lived a most exemplary life: and I will cherish the hope that it will be so with you. O my neighbours! take encouragement from what others have done, to go and do likewise. Go into your chamber, and fall down before God and confess your sins, and forsake your soul-destroying practices. Determine through his assistance that you will not be the slaves of the devil—but be the Lord's free men. Some after their conversion have become very successful in reclaiming others. Set out to-day. "Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation." Come and join yourselves unto the Lord, and let your *tongues* speak for him, and your *example* speak for him, that you may be a blessing and not a curse, through all your remaining days.

IV.—To *those who have not attended the ministry of the word, but who may yet be prevailed upon to attend it.*

I came to reside in this place with a hope to save souls from death—"to warn every man, and to teach every man, that I might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;" and this I have endeavoured to do according to my ability. But you have kept aloof from the ministry of the word, and would not permit my voice to reach your *ear*. "Faith cometh by hearing," but you have done what you could, hitherto, to prevent that blessing from reaching you, at least through my labours. Now I have taken another method, by which I shall reach your *eye*, and that is also an inlet to the heart. Now read this, dear neighbour. Ponder over these things. I hope God will in this way awaken your curiosity, and arouse your conscience, and prepare your heart to receive the word of truth in the love of it.

V.—To *those who have never attended the ministry of the word, and are never likely to attend it.*

The infirmities of age—distance of place—or a want of inclination, may prevent our seeing each other's face in this world: but if we are the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall meet, yea, we shall meet in Heaven, for He hath

said, "*If any man serve me let him follow me, and where I am there shall my servant be.*" This is a solemn and delightful thought. And now will you allow me to propose one thing to you—set apart half an hour for self-examination, and see if you can find any scriptural evidence that you are going to Heaven. Jesus says, "*I am the way, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*" Are you casting away all other confidence, and trusting simply in Christ Jesus? By simply trusting in Christ, you will be secure and not only secure, but you will have peace and joy. "*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" And this will bring down Heaven upon earth,—for "*though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.*"

But a mistake on this subject may prove fatal to your soul. It will be a like leak in the side of a ship. It will sink it. Now to prevent this, I beseech you to go with me a little further while I direct your thoughts to the hour of death, the morning of the resurrection, and the day of judgment.

1.—Think of the hour of death.

No prudent and considerate man can think lightly of death. It cuts asunder all the tender ties of life. It separates the dearest friends. Those whom we love best are torn from us. We put them into a coffin, and carry them to the grave and leave them to be food for the worms. I have been down to the grave with three of my own children; perhaps you have suffered similar bereavements; therefore *we* must consider death as a solemn event. Soon, very soon, the summons will come for you. Are you prepared to meet it? Perhaps you are very busy, and very full of plans for future years, and death may rush suddenly upon you, and disappoint all your expectations. It was so with *one* person, and why may it not be so with you? *He* said, "soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry: but God said unto him, thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided."

But it is possible you are not so swallowed up in worldly things. You may be acting a very different part, and anxiously preparing to meet the last enemy, and how are you doing it? Why you fast, and pray, and read, and watch, and work. Now I wish you to do all this—but if you trust in these doings, you will be lost as certainly as the other. They are equally fatal. No man was ever prepared for death in this way. The law is holy, and just, and good; but the law gives no preparation for heaven. It curses every offender, and leaves him under the curse: *for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified.*" *We have all sinned, and the law cannot*

save us. Here, then, we are brought to a stand. We are shut up. There is no way of escape except God provide one—and glory be to his Holy Name he has done it! Yes—"It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Here, then, is our comfort — we cannot save ourselves, but God has found a Saviour. There are two or three scripture expressions which I like to dwell upon. I will repeat them to you. "*Christ died for our sins,*—as a sacrifice for our sins, —"*and all that believe in him are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law.*" Now is not this encouraging? Then again, "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us.*" And again, "*He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* Christ answers all the demands of the law; therefore it is by a personal interest in the merits of Christ, that a sinner is prepared to meet his God, and we can obtain this "personal interest" when we cordially believe in Christ. This is the turning point— This is the grand question — Do you really and truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you trust in him alone? Are you not mixing your own duties with the merits of Christ? Or renouncing all dependence on yourself, are you saying. "Jesus! thou art my hope! Thou art my all!"

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;"

or, according to the language of the bible, are you seeking "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace?" Then take courage. You are safe. You are complete on him. You are prepared. The apostle says, "There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And you may exult and say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

2. — Let me direct your thoughts to the morning of the resurrection.

One article of the Christian faith is, "I believe in the resurrection of the dead." There are three bodies in heaven already. One is the body of Enoch. "He was translated, that he should not see death." Another is the body of Elijah. He was carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire. The third is the body of Christ. He was crucified, dead, and buried, and the third day he rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven," and "became the first fruits of them that slept." We do not know if there are any bodies in hell; but there are many preparing for it, and it is to prevent you from being of that number that this tract is sent to you.

The resurrection of the body is a wonderful subject, and the way in which it will be brought to pass is very striking.—"*The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised.* The *universality* of it is also wonderful.—*All* that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth." No matter what kind of grave they have had. Some are burnt to ashes. Some drowned. Some devoured by beasts. Some eaten by cannibals. But God will raise the dead; and wherever they are, the trump of God will find them. The design of the resurrection is also wonderful.—"They who have done good to the resurrection of life, and they who have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." O what a morning that will be, when the dust and ashes of a thousand generations shall burst from their graves, and spring to life and immortality, and the bodies of the righteous shall be united to their spirits, and like the glorious body of Christ, shall be happy and glorious for ever!

But what a morning will it be to the wicked, when their bodies, which were slaves to the world, the flesh, and the devil, shall be united to their evil and polluted spirits to be tormented for ever!

Should not every morning lead us to think of that morning, and lead us to prepare for it, by applying afresh to Jesus, who is "the resurrection and the life?"

3.—Look forward to the day of Judgment.

That day has no terrors for a true Christian, but it must be very dreadful to the ungodly.

John describes it in this way:—"And I saw the dead, *small* and *great* stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

This Judge is infinite in knowledge, so that he is perfectly acquainted with every case. He is infinitely just, so that he will reward every man according to his deeds. He is Almighty, so as to be able in a moment to put his sentence into execution. "Before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: and he will place the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left. And he will say to those on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; while he will say to those on his left hand, Depart, from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous unto life eternal!" What think you of this, dear reader! Ah, little as men think of them now, yet surely every thing is a trifle when compared with a place at the right hand of the Judge. O what good would it do you, if you had all the world at your command, if the Judge were to say to you, "Depart from me, ye cursed!" And this will surely be the doom of multitudes.

I began this tract by saying, "*I wish to meet you all in heaven.*" I repeat it. This is my desire; and I shall not be disappointed, if you, in simplicity and godly sincerity, commit your precious souls to the care and keeping of the Lord Jesus Christ, "for he is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him."

"But O, the soul that never dies!
At once it leaves the clay;
Ye thoughts pursue it where it flies,
And track its wondrous way.

Up to the courts where angels dwell,
It mounts triumphing there;
Or devils plunge it down to hell,
In infinite despair.

And must my body faint and die?
And must my soul remove?
O for some guardian angel nigh,
To bear it safe above!

Jesus, to thy dear faithful hand
My naked soul I trust;
And my flesh waits for thy command
To drop into the dust."

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A WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN.

I WAS once favoured with the sight of a letter, written by an American lady to her husband a little before she died. This lady was an eminent christian, remarkable for her confidence in God, and for attention to the spiritual welfare of her numerous offspring. In speaking to her husband respecting their beloved children, she used this memorable sentence: "I rejoice in hope that we shall meet an unbroken family before the throne of God;" or, according to the title of this—"a whole family in heaven."

From our earliest years we are accustomed to hear of a place of unutterable glory; that place is heaven. As our minds expand, we are told that heaven is the dwelling-place of God. Then, if any of our friends die, we are taught to hope they are gone to heaven, to be for ever with God, and that it is our duty to prepare to follow them. In some cases, the minds of young people are deeply affected by these representations; and it is their unspeakable happiness to begin to prepare for heaven almost as soon as they can think at all. But it is not so generally. Alas! it too often happens that men run on for many years in a course of forgetfulness of God, and of rebellion against God, before they are brought to repentance; and some never repent at all, but remain in their rebellion for ever. They proceed from one step to another, from bad to worse, until they perish in their sins! Oh what a fearful sight is a gray-headed sinner! "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may they learn to do well who have been accustomed to do evil." It would be well if these thoughts had an abiding place in our hearts; but many things concur to remove them. Ah! this busy world, this ensnaring world, this sinful world! Yet amidst all its snares, and vanities, and sins, we sometimes find a person whose affections are set on things above; yea, we now and then are privileged to behold a whole family setting out in good earnest, and determined, by the help of God, to appear "a whole family in heaven."

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In musing on this subject, I thought of the following particulars, which I send out into the world with many prayers, in hope that those who read them may be benefited, and that a few at least may thereby be helped on their way to glory.

First. What a glorious sight it will be to behold all Christ's redeemed family in heaven! Now they are separated. Part of them are in heaven, and the other part are yet on earth; but there is a day coming when they will be gathered out of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, and make a great multitude which no man can number. Oh blissful morning, when my eyes shall gaze on this redeemed family!

Second. How happy will you be to see yourselves in heaven, and every member of your family with you!—not one wanting. Father and mother, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, servants and apprentices—all there. All who surrounded the family table. All who knelt together around the family altar. However separated by distance or time, yet meeting in heaven at last. Reader, is there any prospect that this will be the case with you? Have you ever any doubts respecting it? O seek to have these doubts removed! Have you any hopes respecting it? O see that your hopes are well founded! Are you unconcerned about it? Ah! that is dreadful. Heaven is not to be trifled with. Hell is not to be trifled with. Souls are not to be trifled with. Remember the day is coming, it is nigh at hand, when you will see and feel that these things deserved your chief attention.

Third. What a cheering circumstance it is when one in a family has chosen heaven for his portion! Look at that man. Mark him well. Set it down as a certainty that he will not go to heaven alone. He cannot be satisfied to walk solitarily in the way to Zion. He must have companions, and through God's blessing he will make them. We anticipate great things from such a character; and well we may, for God says to every new convert, "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." From the day of his conversion he begins to pray, and "the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." He also begins to shine, and he giveth light unto all that are in the house. To such a friend I would say, O, watch for their souls. Look up to God for Divine guidance, that you may act wisely in your station. Never be discouraged. God waited

long for you, therefore be patient with others. Let the hope of bringing a whole family to heaven animate, quicken you. In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; and when you are leaning simply on him, he will make you almost forget your own weakness, by the assurance that his arm is almighty.

Fourth. When a part of a family is already in heaven, what a powerful influence should this fact have on survivors! Oh it is a solemn and instructive event when one member of a family is taken to glory. The thought of those who are there ought to loosen our hearts from earth, and to raise our souls to heaven. Reader! shall you join this happy company? Soon, soon you will leave this earthly state, and whither will you go? will you join your family in heaven? Have you made any preparation for it? Except a man be born again, he cannot enter that kingdom. You must be born again! Are you born again? What is there about you which indicates your heavenly birth? Recollect that the removal of one member of a family to a better world, has sometimes been overruled by Divine Providence for leading all the other members to consider their ways, to repent of their sins, to seek mercy through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to walk humbly with God, until a voice from above said unto them, "Come up hither."

Fifth. How alarming it is when only one in a family gives evidence that he is not preparing for heaven! Oh how can we bear to think of a whole family in heaven—but one! Who should we select to be that miserable absentee? Whose child should we pitch upon? Whose brother should we mark as the victim? Does not our blood run cold? Do not our hearts shudder at the thought? Are we not all ready to exclaim, "Let not this misery fall on one of mine?" Now, parents, now is the time. Is there one in your family not preparing for heaven? What ought to be done in his case? Shall you let him alone? Oh no. Let your tears flow. Let your prayers ascend. Let your hearts melt. Let your language pierce his soul. O, follow him. Determine never to give him up until you have reclaimed the prodigal—until you have snatched the firebrand from the flame; then you may go on your way rejoicing in hope that all your family will meet in heaven.

Sixth. How ought the members of this heavenly family to live together while they are here upon earth? They are

redeemed by the same blood, justified by the same grace, sanctified by the same Spirit, brethren of the same family, heirs of the same inheritance. They tell us that they expect to meet in glory, and to join in the same song of praise, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory for ever. Amen!" This is delightful. Pray how ought they to live together here? Like brethren, certainly. Like the children of God. Like the heirs of heaven. And do they act thus? How do you act? On what terms are you living with your brethren? Remember, you are not fit for heaven if you cannot, if you do not love your brother. O, if ever you expect to have the Divine blessing resting upon your own souls, if ever you expect to see many turning to the Lord from among your neighbours, ye must first see to it that ye love one another.

Lastly. How dreadful will it be to see a whole family in hell! And is there not reason to fear that many whole families are already there? Awful thought! See them shut up in endless despair. O, see them in the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. But what is more necessary for our present consideration is this—Are there not whole families at this moment on their way thither to whom not one word of solemn, friendly, godly counsel has been given—who have never once been warned to flee from the wrath to come?

O, brethren! ye that love the Lord indeed, is there nothing for you to do among the multitudes which are ready to perish? Surely if you had compassion like unto the Son of God, here is work enough for it all. And where ought you to begin? O, begin at home. Search your own heart; examine how matters stand with you there. Then search your own habitations. Examine how matters are there. Next, call on your neighbours. Press home the invitations of the gospel. Say, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Beseech them in Christ's stead to be reconciled nuto God; and when you come to die, you will not regret that you laboured hard to bring a whole family to heaven—that you laboured hard to save a whole family from hell.

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HOW TO TRAIN A FAMILY TO BE HAPPY NOW, AND FOR EVER.

READER, are you a parent? if so, to you is this little tract addressed. It is designed to offer advice on the means to be employed for training up your children in such a way as shall, under the Divine blessing, promote their temporal welfare, and their eternal happiness. The truths here set before you are taught in the Scriptures. If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and obey his instructions, you will be happy; if not, you must be miserable. If you act under his guidance, you have good reason to hope that your children will be blessed in him, and to eternity; if not, they will most likely be for ever accursed. The subject of training your children in the right way, is, therefore, one of deep importance. It concerns you now, and will concern you for ever. It is connected with the interests of your children now, and with their welfare through eternal ages.

In offering some hints, on the various means to be employed in teaching your children their duty to God and man, it may, in the first place, be remarked, that all parental efforts must be carried on, relying upon God for the promised aid of his Holy Spirit. Pray for his blessing. Expect success, not from any great excellency in your own exertions, but from God working by them, and with them Let not this be an excuse for sinful inactivity, for God blesses the diligent, while he withholds his blessing from the slothful. Abhor the wicked and cruel conduct of those parents, who excuse the neglect of their children by the useless plea, that God only can give converting grace. Thus urged it is an awful abuse and perversion of a sacred truth. Will such parents neglect their worldly affairs on the shallow excuse they employ for neglecting their children's immortal souls? The farmer tills the ground, and sows the seed, and God gives the harvest. Parents should

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sow the sacred seed of Divine truth in their children's hearts; and in this case also, God gives the harvest. There is no more reason for supposing that he will deny the harvest in the latter case, than in the former. If a husbandman were to let his fields lie barren, for want of sowing, and thus bring his family to ruin by his neglect, it would be bad; but it bears no comparison in guilt and cruelty, with the conduct of a parent, who suffers his children to live in ignorance, and perish in sin, under the excuse that he cannot give them grace. Plant and water, and God will give the increase. Observe that your children should be trained up, I. By your own example. II. By the general order of your house. III. By habits taught them of attending Divine worship, and acting in the view of eternity. IV. By instructions given them.

The Divine precept is, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it," Prov. xxii. 6. This is a very important representation of parental duty. How would you train a tree? Would you not begin the operation while the branches were young and pliant; fixing them then in the right direction, and afterwards watching and guiding their growth? Would you not continue the process, by pruning away what was useless or hurtful, and directing every useful shoot, till the tree should assume the shape desired, and cover the wall it overspread with verdure and with fruit? Thus train your child; thus try to subdue and remove whatever is hurtful, and thus guide into the right way his views, his feelings, his desires and affections. Think it not enough now and then to give a check to what is evil, or an impulse to what is good; but pursue the course, from month to month, and from year to year. As early as possible, after a young immortal has begun the journey of life which conducts him to eternity, those to whom he is confided should begin to unfold to him the Saviour's lessons, and to direct him to the Saviour as a guide who can never err.

I. Your children should be trained by your own example. If they see you habitually sober, just, kind, gentle, benevolent, attentive to the duties of your station, to the Bible, to the house of God, to the Saviour and his claims, such an example will teach, and teach perpetually. It is a living constant lesson, always in their view. Mr. James, mentions the case of a youth, who had a pious father but who

himself hated religion, and was unwilling to tread in his father's steps. To find an excuse for neglecting religion, he determined to watch his father, that he might, if possible, detect some proof of insincerity; but he watched in vain. He could find nothing in his father's conduct to justify his dislike to religion. And such was the influence of his parent's example, that he at last was brought to yield himself to the Saviour; he embraced the gospel, and became an honourable and zealous Christian. So important is example, that you cannot train up your children in the way they should go, unless your example teaches, as well as your instructions. If you are one of the multitude that make light of the Saviour, you need the knowledge of his grace yourself, before you can promote the real happiness of your children. How can you teach the way to heaven, if you do not walk in it? Can you give a traveller directions about a road which you have never seen? or teach a language which you have never learned? If you, by a careless life, serve Satan, can you expect to teach your children to serve God? and while pursuing the way of death, to direct them into the path of life?—Such an expectation is indeed foolish. It is doubly mischievous for parents to be without religion; it ruins their own souls, and tends to destroy their children's also. How awful is such a state! awful to the parent, who is yet in his sins; but more awful, when it is considered that his ungodliness may destroy his offspring, as well as himself; and that in perishing for ever, he has not the dreadful privilege of perishing alone, but is dragging others down with him to eternal death.

II. Children should be trained up in the way of life, by the general order of their parents' house. If it is what it ought to be, it will often fasten conviction on their minds, however wicked they may become. Family worship forms a most important part of domestic order; and, besides drawing down Divine blessings, will exert a powerful influence on the infant and youthful mind. Maintain the worship of God in your family, if you desire his blessing to descend on you and yours. Let this important duty be attended to at such hours as to secure the attendance, if possible, of the whole family. Teach your children, by the prayers you utter, and the spirit in which you offer them, that all your dependence for every blessing is on God;

that you rely on his Spirit for constant help; and, above all things else, desire that they should know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20, is a promise, that in all its richness encourages the practice of domestic worship. The neglect of prayer clearly proves a state of spiritual death. Satan prays not; and those who never pray bear a dreadful likeness to him. From hell no prayers ascend to God; who would have his house, in this respect, bear a resemblance to the prison of the lost?

III. Children should be trained to habits of attending Divine worship, and acting in the view of eternity. Practically teach them to keep holy the Lord's day. Children may very soon be taught to behave with propriety in the house of God. Teach your children they are never to ask such a question as, Am I to go to worship to-day? but that it is as much a matter of course, as rising in the morning; and to be considered as much their regular privilege, as partaking of their daily food. Some parents, who even profess religion, show a most sinful and awful indifference to the salvation of their children, by tolerating in them habits of sabbath-breaking. While they, perhaps, are at the house of prayer, their children are taking their pleasure at home, playing in the streets, or wandering in the fields. Such fathers and mothers take an effectual way to train up their children not for God, not for heaven, but for hell. Let eternity be kept in sight, in all your plans for them; look not only at their worldly comfort, but much more at their everlasting interests. If you were about to place your child in a situation for one day, and then in another for twenty years, would you when planning for the day, forget the twenty years? If in any case the interests of the two periods were in opposition, surely you would let the twenty years outweigh the day. The difference between a day and twenty years is, however, perfectly insignificant when compared with that between the longest life and eternity. Never so plan for this world, as to ruin your children for that which is to come. Impress upon their minds that eternity is before them, and that those only are truly wise, who secure eternal blessings. Say, "My child, what concerns you most, what I am most anxious about, is not what you are to be, or to possess here, for a little while, but what you are to be, and to have,

for ever. You and I are soon to be inhabitants of another world; there we must abide for ever. That world must be either heaven or hell; and by faith in Christ, to reach heaven, and obtain its blessings, is your chief interest and weightiest concern!"

IV. Children should be trained up by having suitable instructions given them. As the fountain of all knowledge for the soul, teach them to value the Bible. Impress on their minds that it is the book of God, which has been valued and loved by the wisest, and greatest, and best of mankind. On this subject hear God's own words: "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," Deut. vi. 6, 7. Remark what stress the all-wise and most blessed God here lays upon scriptural instruction. He kindly lays this stress upon it, because that instruction is the most solid and beneficial, for time and for eternity.

The earliest religious lesson to be given to your children is, that there is a great, and holy, and blessed God. Tell them of his existence. At first your assertion of this fact, will be sufficient to secure their belief of its certainty; and as their powers of mind expand, there is no subject on which it is easier to give convincing proof. Show them that his existence is proved from his works; that as their toys, or their house, could not be produced without a maker, much less could the world. So clear is this proposition, that even a little child will perceive its force. No child will believe that his toys made themselves, or that his father's house was erected without a builder. And then, if the attention be directed to the wide creation, almost an infant mind will comprehend the inference, that to make all things there must be a God. Teach them that he is Almighty, and therefore his favour most desirable, and his anger most dreadful. That he is a God of truth, and will do all he threatens or promises. That he is ever present with them, is about their bed, and about their path, observes all their ways, knows all they think, and hears all they speak. Such lessons may be best given by your own conversations. Teach them, also, that God is good, and good to them; that their mercies, their friends, and their

comforts, all are enjoyed through his bounty, and therefore demand their thankfulness, love, and obedience, and should excite their sorrow for ever having offended him.

Teach your children that God is the "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," and that they are sinners. In regard to their sinful and undone condition, they need line upon line, and lesson upon lesson. Blindness, on this subject, keeps many in a state of darkness and spiritual ruin, almost from the cradle to the grave. Not only teach them that they are sinners, but that they are accountable creatures, who must give an account to God of the deeds done in the body. Remind them that no one of their sinful actions or thoughts is unnoticed by him; and that he will "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," Eccles. xii. 14.

Tell them what they may become; what happiness awaits the children of God. Tell them, also, that there is a dreadful hell. Remind them that one or other of these worlds must soon be their abode, and that for ever. Forget not to impress upon them, that if they die in their sins, where Christ is they cannot go.

While pointing out their state as sinners, show them clearly, that there is but one way of escaping from their ruined condition; that no merits of their own can procure pardon, but that there is an all-sufficient Saviour. In very early years children are capable of understanding much respecting the Saviour's grace and glory. Teach them, therefore, what the Scriptures reveal respecting Jesus Christ. That he was in the beginning with God, and was God, John i. 1, 2; the Creator of heaven and earth, Heb. i. 10; that in the fulness of time he assumed human nature; became for man, a man of sorrows. Lead them to contemplate his humiliation, when the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, but he had not where to lay his head, Luke ix. 58; and his sufferings in Gethsemane, and the scenes of sorrow connected with his death, Matt. xxvi., xxvii. Remind them that all this was endured on their account, and because of their transgressions, as truly as if they had been the only sinners in existence. Even the sublime doctrine of the atonement may, in what is most important, be brought down to the mind of a child by some familiar comparison. It is stated, that in the school of the late Mr. Kilpin, of Exeter, were two brothers. The younger,

for some offence, had deserved punishment. The elder entreated that he might suffer it: "Do sir," said he, "take me in exchange for my naughty brother." Mr. Kilpin said, "Did you ever hear of any one who bore stripes and insults to shield offenders?" "Oh yes, sir; the Lord Jesus gave his back to the smiters for us, poor sinners, and by his stripes are we healed and pardoned. O sir, pardon James, for my sake, and let me endure the pain; I can bear it better than he." "Does he not deserve correction?" "Oh yes, sir; he has broken the rules of the school after many warnings; you said he must suffer; therefore as I know you would not speak an untruth, and the law must be kept, and he is sullen, and will not repent—what can be done, sir? Please to take me, because I am stronger than he." Thus pleaded the kind brother. By a simple fact like this, your children may be taught the glorious truth, that Christ came to give his life a ransom for many. Show them that to yield themselves up to him is unspeakably important; that religion is lovely, beneficial, productive of comfort and peace, and leading to happiness and heaven: that none are more welcome to the Saviour than the young; that he loves those who love him, and that those who seek him early shall find him, Prov. viii. 17.

Obedience to parents is a duty that should be deeply impressed on their minds. God has commanded, "Honour thy father and thy mother;" "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right," Exod. xx. 12, and Eph. vi. 1. Explain to them that God has committed them, in their early years, to their parents' care, and that to disobey them is (except parents desire them to do wrong) to disobey him; and that God sees every act of disobedience, even when hidden from theirparents' notice. It is important to be very firm in maintaining your authority. For want of this many parents, especially mothers, lose all government of their children. Strive to secure the love of your children; but let them be sensible that they must still obey you. Almost in infancy children show a determination, if possible, to have their own will gratified. These first efforts should be met by unbending firmness. When thus a few times overcome, the child learns that it is in vain to struggle for his own way; thus he may by degrees acquire a submissive disposition. But let him conquer in infancy, and he will become more self-willed in childhood, and still more so as years roll on, till parental government will no longer exist.

When children require punishment, it should be inflicted by a parent in a Christian spirit. A parent should never correct in a passion. The child then feels himself injured, and resents the treatment of his parent. Very different is the effect of the same, or even a much less measure of punishment, if inflicted with a calm manner, gently pointing out, that you punish him with sorrow, from a sense of duty, because he has committed a great fault, and displeased the great God. Beware of punishing for merely childish errors; but never overlook actual sins, as lying, pilfering, profaneness, etc.; and point out that this punishment is inflicted that he may feel the evil of sin, and forsake what God so much abhors. A little boy, who had been guilty of lying and stealing, was thus treated. His father talked with him on the greatness of his sin, told him he must punish him, represented to him the consequences of sin, as far worse than his present punishment; and then chastised him. These means were made a blessing to the child, and from that time he shunned both falsehood and dishonesty. A few angry words and violent blows would have produced no such effect.

Care should be taken to infuse a kind and benevolent spirit. Encourage children to believe that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." If your ability to give to others is small, there are other acts of kindness you may perform; and you will confer real benefit on your children, if you employ them to be your helpers in deeds of mercy. They should by no means be allowed to take pleasure in the death or sufferings of any animals. Torturing of insects, or birds, or beasts, should be represented to them as a sin against God, the great Creator. Parents who permit their children to find amusement in witnessing dogs or cocks fighting, and in setting them to do so, are training them to be ruffians and reprobates. Children should be taught that all amusement of this kind is worthy only of a savage or a demon; and those who take delight in scenes of cruelty, are the slaves of that most cruel being, Satan, and will soon be tormented with him, unless their hearts are changed, and their sins forgiven. The Saviour's inestimable rule, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," Matt. vii. 12, contains almost every practical precept in one, and should be their daily guide. When they have been guilty of unkindness, bring them to this rule, with some such inquiry as, "Would you like to be treated as you have now treated another?" or, "Would

you like your brother and sister to behave to you as you have now behaved to them?" Unkind or insulting behaviour towards the poor, or the deformed, should be brought to this test, and its evil thus exposed: "If you were poor, or lame, or deformed, should you like to be an object of contempt? Would you like others to make sport of your affliction, or to ridicule your infirmities?"

Habits of industry are of great importance to the young. Let them be reminded that time is a precious talent, entrusted to them by God, for which an account must hereafter be rendered; that sloth and sauntering away time, are grievous sins, and tend to ruin. A slothful man cannot be a true Christian. The wicked and ruined servant described in one of our Lord's parables, Matt. xxv. 26, was not a profligate, but a slothful man.

Self-denial is essential to religion here, and to salvation hereafter. The Lord Jesus declares to his disciples, that they must take up their cross daily, and follow him; and he "pleased not himself." Teach your children then to deny their own inclinations, and to govern their appetites. To mortify children, for the sake of mortifying them, is unkind and absurd; but it is equally wrong to humour every unreasonable fancy, to give them all they cry for, and as they advance into childhood and youth to gratify all their wishes, however unreasonable. Self-denial should be shown by forgiving real or fancied injuries. As soon as a resentful spirit appears, efforts should be used for its destruction. Teach your children its sinfulness. Show them that they have offended God much more than any one can injure them; that God forgives, and they must forgive, or they will never be forgiven. A parent should never allow in his children a habit of talking against those who have displeased them. This springs from sin, and is one way in which resentment is vented, and a revengeful temper indulged.

As soon as they can speak, children should be taught to pray. The first prayer should be short and simple; and be sure that they understand the meaning of the few brief sentences they repeat; and impress upon their minds, that when offering that prayer, they speak to their unseen and glorious God. When past the years of infancy, they should be taught a fuller and ampler form of prayer. And as they advance to the days of youth, a pious parent will teach them to speak as to God, to open their hearts to

him; to think of their wants, and to express them; to confess their sins, to plead the Saviour's death, and to implore pardon for his sake. Encourage them to set apart some time in the morning for prayer and reading the Bible, and in the evening also, before drowsiness and sleepiness come on; this will be teaching them to obey the Saviour's injunction, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," Matt. vi. 6.

The evil of falsehood, and a sacred regard to truth, should be impressed on children. Before they can speak plain, little ones will begin to lie; point out the great wickedness of this sin. Teach them that the devil is the father of lies, that God hates a lying tongue, that all liars will be shut out of heaven, and will have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.

Children should be taught the strictest regard to integrity; that justice is approved, and injustice abhorred by God. They should learn that he who steals a farthing, would, if he had the opportunity, steal many pounds, and is equally a thief; that "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke xvi. 10. Teach them, therefore, to shun every approach to dishonesty by pilfering the smallest article. In their dealings with each other, children should be required to be scrupulously just, and in all they do to be strictly upright.

It may be well to remark here, that when a child has fallen under a temptation of this kind, and has taken that which was not his own, and suffered punishment for the offence, there should be no needless exposure of the circumstance. Character is dear to children as well as older persons; and as the man who has lost all character, is prepared for every crime, so a child who feels his character is lost by an unwise exposure, is more likely to be indifferent about his future conduct. Some parents have a thoughtless and mischievous habit of talking about the faults of their children to strangers and others, whose good opinion their children would covet: this tends to harden them, by taking away the sense of shame, instead of teaching them to repress and struggle against the fault in future.

Be very careful what company your children keep. "He

that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed," Prov. xiii. 20. Many a promising boy, for want of care on the part of his parents, has, by vices learned from his wicked associates, brought down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. And many an interesting hopeful girl, has found in some evil companion, her seducer, the destroyer of her peace, her honour, her happiness, and it may be her life.

Perhaps, the most critical period in the life of young persons, is that which begins when they leave the home of a parent, to become for some years inmates in some other family. The period from fifteen to twenty is a most important part of human life. What persons are at the close of it, they are, for the most part, for ever. A parent, who is about to apprentice a child, should weigh the solemn consequences. A pious parent should use every effort to place his child in a godly family. Many a situation promises fair for this world, that would be ruinous as to the world to come. Parents who place their children in such circumstances pursue the shadow, and lose the substance, grasp the good of the moment, and neglect the more exalted good of eternity.

Lastly; patience and perseverance are greatly needed by every parent. We observe that the statuary will labour for months, or years, to chisel the marble block, till it presents the form and face of him it is intended to represent, and to show to the men of after-times. Should not parents as patiently persevere, when their efforts are directed, not to fashion rude marble into the image of a man, but an immortal mind into the image of the Saviour? No object is so grand, none connected with results so blessed, if successful; so terrible, if it fail. It was the boast of an ancient painter, that he painted for eternity: this was a vain boast, for long since the fruits of his labour and skill have passed into oblivion. On the lips of a Christian instructor this is no vain boast. Such are employed in forming, under Divine influence, upon deathless spirits, a lovely likeness of the Saviour, which eternity will never efface. The successful efforts of pious parents, in training up their children for God, will be visible in the character and happiness of their favoured offspring, millions of centuries hence. The flight of eternal ages will not efface the impressions that were produced in the brief span of time. The character,

through grace, acquired on earth, will be preserved in heaven. The imperfect likeness of the Saviour gained in this world will in the world beyond the grave shine forth in all the perfection of loveliness and beauty. With such a glorious object in view, parents may well apply these words, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," Eph. vi. 9.

Saviour of the lost! great Author of salvation! who didst pity little children, and take them in thine arms and bless them, let these few lines excite in the parents who have read them, an earnest, ceaseless, prayerful desire to train up their children for thee.

HYMN FOR PARENTS.

Gracious Lord, our children see;
By thy mercy we are free:
But shall these, alas! remain,
Subjects still of Satan's reign?
Israel's young ones, when of old
Pharoah threaten'd to withold;
Then thy messenger said, "No;
Let the children also go."

When the angel of the Lord,
Drawing forth his dreadful sword,
Slew, with an avenging hand,
All the first-born of the land;
Then thy people's doors he pass'd,
Where the bloody sign was placed:
Hear us now upon our knees,
Plead the blood of Christ for these.

Lord, we tremble, for we know
How the fierce malicious foe,
Wheeling round his watchful flight,
Keeps them ever in his sight.
Spread thy pinions, King of kings,
Hide them safe beneath thy wings;
Lest the rav'nous bird of prey
Stoop, and bear the brood away.

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No. 69.

FAMILY WORSHIP;

AN

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

BY THE LATE P. DODDRIDGE, D. D.

THIS address may come into the hands of many, who have long been exemplary for their diligence and zeal in the duties I am about to recommend. Such, I hope, will be confirmed, by what they read, in pursuing the good resolutions they have taken, and the good customs they have formed; and will also be excited more earnestly to endeavour to contribute towards introducing the like into other families over which they have any influence, and especially into those which may branch out from their own, by the settlement of children or servants.

But I have those principally in view, who have hitherto lived in the omission of family prayer.

While I write this, I have that awakening scripture before me: "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name!" Jer. x. 25. I appeal to you, whether this does not strongly imply, that every family, which is not a heathen family, which is not quite ignorant of the living and true God, will call upon his name.

Well may it then pain my heart to think that

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there should be a professedly christian family, whom this dreadful character suits; well may it pain my heart to think of the Divine fury, which may be poured out on the heads and on the members of it; and well may it make me desirous to do my utmost to secure you and yours from every appearance and possibility of such danger. Excuse the earnestness with which I may address you. I really fear lest, while you delay, the fire of the Divine displeasure should fall upon you, Gen. xix. 16, 17. And as I adore the patience of God in having thus long suspended the storm, I am anxious about every hour's delay, lest it should fall the heavier.

What I desire and entreat of you is, that you would honour and acknowledge God in your families, by calling them together every day to hear some part of his word read to them, and to join for a few minutes, at least, in your confessions, prayers, and praises to him. And is this a cause that should need to be pleaded at large by a great variety of united motives? Truly, the petition seems so reasonable, and a compliance with it from one who has not quite renounced religion, might seem so natural, that one would think the bare proposing of it must suffice. Yet experience tells it is much otherwise. Some, who maintain a public profession of religion, have refused, and will continue to refuse, year after year.

Reflect, sir, (for I address myself to every particular person,) seriously reflect on the reasonableness of family religion. Must not your conscience presently tell you, it is fit that persons who receive so many mercies together should acknowledge them together? Can you in your mind be satisfied that you and your nearest relatives should pay no joint homage to that God who hath set you in your family and who hath given to you, and to the several members of it, so many domestic enjoyments? Can it be right, if you have any sense of these things, each of you, in your own hearts, that the sense of them should

be concealed and smothered there, and that you should never join in your grateful acknowledgments to him? Can you imagine it reasonable that when you have a constant dependence upon him for so many mercies, without the concurrence of which your family would be a scene of misery, you should never present yourselves together in his presence, to ask them at his hand? Upon what principle is public worship to be recommended and urged, if not by such as have their proportionable weight here?

Indeed the force of these considerations has not only been known and acknowledged by the people of God in all ages; we have not only Noah and Abraham, Joshua and David, Job and Daniel, each under a much darker dispensation than ours, as examples of it; but even the poor heathen had their household images some of them in private chapels, and others about the common hearth, where the family used to worship them by frequent prayers and sacrifices. And the brass, and wood, and stone, of which they consisted, shall (as it were) cry out against you, shall rise up against you and condemn you, if, while you call yourselves the worshippers of the one living and eternal God, and boast in the revelation you have received by his prophets and by his Son, you presume to omit a homage, which the stupid worshippers of such vanities as these failed not to present to them, while they called them their gods. Be persuaded then, I beseech you, to be consistent in your conduct. Either give up all pretence to religion, or maintain a steady and uniform regard to it, at home as well as abroad, in the family as well as in the closet, or at church.

1. Consider the happy influence which the duty I am recommending might have upon the young members of your family, the children and servants committed to your care. For I now consider you as a parent and a master. The father of a family is a phrase that comprehends both these relations, and

with great propriety, as humanity obliges us to endeavour to take a parental care of all under our roof. And, indeed, you ought to consider your servants, in this view, with a tender regard. They are probably in the flower of life, for that is the age which is commonly spent in service: and you should recollect how possible it is that this may be, if rightly improved, the best opportunity their whole life may afford them for learning religion, and being brought under the power of it. Let them not, if they should finally perish, have cause to testify before God, in the day of their condemnation, that under your roof they learned the neglect and forgetfulness of God, and all that their pious parents, perhaps in a much inferior station of life to you, had in earlier days been attempting to teach them. Or, if they come to you quite ignorant of religion, (as if they come from prayerless families, it is very probable that they do,) have compassion upon them, I entreat you, and endeavour to give them those advantages which they never yet had, and which, it is too probable, as things are generally managed, they never will have, if you will not afford them.

But I will especially, if I might be allowed to borrow the pathetic words of Job, Entreat you by the children of your own body, Job xix. 17. I would now, as it were, present them all before you, and beseech you by the bowels of parental affection, that to all the other tokens of tenderness and love you would not refuse to add this, without which many of the rest may be worse than in vain.

Give me leave to plead with you as the instruments of introducing them into being. O remember, it is indeed a debased and corrupted nature you have conveyed to them. Consider that the world into which you have been the means of bringing them, is a place in which they are surrounded with many temptations, and in which, as they advance in life, they must expect many more; so that it is much to be feared that

they will remain ignorant and forgetful of God, if they do not learn from you to love and serve him. For how can it be expected that they should learn this at all, if you give them no advantages for receiving and practising the lesson at home?

And let me further urge and entreat you to remember, that these dear children are committed to your special care by God their Creator; who has made them thus dependant upon you, that you might have an opportunity of forming their minds, and of influ encing them to a right temper and conduct. And can this by any means be effectually done, if you do not at proper times call them together, to attend to the instructions of the word of God, and to join in solemn prayers and supplications to him? At least is it possible that it should be done any other way with equal advantage, if this be not added to the rest?

Family worship is a most proper way of teaching children religion, as you teach them language by insensible degrees—a little one day, and a little another; for to them line must be upon line, and precept upon precept. They may learn to conceive aright of the Divine perfections, when they hear you daily acknowledging and adoring them; their hearts may be early touched with remorse for sin, when they hear your confessions poured out before God; they will know what mercies they are to ask for themselves, by observing what turn your petitions take; your intercessions may diffuse into their minds a spirit of love to mankind, a concern for the interest of the church and of their country; and what is not, I think, by any means to be neglected, sentiments of loyalty towards our sovereign and his family, when they hear you often invoking the Divine blessing upon them; and your solemn thanksgivings for the bounties of Providence, and for benefits of a spiritual nature, may affect their hearts with those impressions towards the gracious Author of all, which may excite in their little breasts, love to Him, the most noble and genuine

principle of all true and acceptable religion:—thus they may become christians by insensible degrees, and grow in the knowledge and love of truth, as they do in stature. Indeed, were this duty properly attended to, it might be expected that all christian families would, according to their respective sizes and circumstances, become nurseries of piety; and you would see, in the most convincing view, the wisdom of Providence, in making human infants so much more dependant on their parents, so much more incapable to shift for themselves, than the offspring of inferior creatures are.

Let me then entreat you, my dear friend, to look on your children the very next time you see them, and ask your own heart, how can you answer it to God, and to them, that you deprive them of such advantages as these? advantages, without which, it is to be feared, your care of them, in other respects, will turn to but little account, should they be ever so prosperous in life. For what is prosperity in life without the knowledge, and fear, and love of God! What, but the poison of the soul, which swells and kills it! What, but the means of making it more certainly, more deeply, more intolerably miserable! In short, not to mention the happy influence which family devotion may have on their temporal affairs, by drawing down the Divine blessing, and by forming their minds to those virtues, which pave the way to wealth and reputation, health and contentment, which make no enemies, and attract many friends; it is, with respect to the eternal world, the greatest cruelty to your children to neglect giving them those advantages, which no other attentions in education, exclusive of these, can afford; and it is impossible that you should ever be able to give them any other equivalent. If you do your duty in this respect, they will have reason to bless you, living and dying, and if you neglect it, take care that you and they come not, in consequence of that neglect into a world where

horrid as the thought may seem) you will be for ever cursing each other!

2. Let me now press you to consider how much your own interest is concerned in the matter.

Your spiritual interest is concerned. Let me seriously ask you, Do you not need those advantages for religion, which the performance of family duty will give you, added to those of a more secret and of a more public nature, if peradventure they are regarded by you? These instructions, these adorations, these confessions, these supplications, these intercessions, these thanksgivings, which may be so useful to your children and servants—may they not be useful to yourself? May not your own heart have some peculiar advantage for being impressed, when you are the mouth of others in these domestic devotions, beyond what, in a private station of life, it is otherwise possible that you should have? Nay, the remoter influence they may have on your conduct, in other respects, and at other times, when considered merely, in the general, as religious exercises performed by you in your family, is to be recollected as an argument of vast importance.

A sense of common decency would engage you, if you pray with your family, to avoid a great many evils which would appear doubly evil in a father or a master who kept up such religious exercises in his house. Do you imagine, that, if reading the scriptures, and family prayer, were introduced into the houses of some of your neighbours—drunkenness and lewdness, and cursing and swearing, and profaning the Lord's day, would not, like so many evil demons, be quickly driven out? The master of a family would not, for shame, indulge them, if he had nothing more than the form of duty kept up; and his reformation, though only external, and at first on a kind of constraint, would carry with it the reformation of many more, who have such a dependance on his favour as they would not sacrifice, though by a

madness very prevalent among the children of men they can venture to sacrifice their souls to every trifle.

And may it not perhaps be your more immediate concern to recollect that if you prayed with your family, you would yourself be more careful to abstain from all appearance of evil? 1 Thess. v. 22. You would find out a way to suppress that turbulency of passion, which may now be ready to break out before you are aware, and other imprudences, in which your own heart would check you by saying, "Does this become one, that is by and by to kneel down with his domestics, his children, and servants, and adore God with them, and pray against every thing which displeases God, and makes us unfit for the heavenly world?" I will not say this will cure every thing that is wrong; but I believe you are already persuaded it would often have a very good influence. And I fear it is the secret desire of indulging some irregularities without such a restraint, that, shameful as such conduct is, has driven out family prayer from several houses where it was once maintained, and has prevented its introduction into others. But if you have any secret disinclination of heart rising against it in this view, it becomes you seriously to take the alarm; for, to speak plainly, I hardly know a blacker symptom of damnation, than a fear of being restrained in the commission of sin.

After this it may seem a matter of small importance to urge the good influence which a proper discharge of family duty may have upon your own temporal affairs; both by restraining you from many evils, and engaging you to a proper conduct yourself, and also by impressing your children and servants with a sense of religion. And it is certain the more careful they are of their duty to God, the more likely they will be to perform their duty to you. Nor can any thing strengthen your natural authority among them more than your presiding in such solemnities, if

supported by a suitable conduct. But I would hope nobler motives will have a superior weight. And therefore, waving this topic, I entreat you as the last argument to consider,

3. The influence it may have on a general reformation, and on the propagation of religion to those who are yet unborn. You ought to consider every child and servant in your family as one who may be a source, not only of life, but (in some degree) of character and happiness to those who are hereafter to arise into being; yea, whose conduct may in part affect those that are to descend from them in a remote generation. If they grow up, while under your eye, ignorant of religion, they will certainly be much less capable of teaching it to others: for these are the years of discipline, and if they are neglected now, there is little probability of their receiving after instruction. Nor is this all the evil consequence; for it is highly probable, that they will think themselves sanctioned by your example in a like negligence; and so you may entail heathenism under the name of christianity, on your descendants and theirs for ages to come. Whereas your diligence and zeal might be remembered, and imitated by them, perhaps when you are in your grave; and the stock which they first received from you, might with rich improvement be communicated to great numbers, so that one generation after another might learn to fear and serve the Lord. On the whole, God only knows what a church may arise from one godly family, what a harvest may spring up from one single seed; and, on the other hand, it is impossible to say how many souls may at length perish by the treacherous neglect of a single person, and, to speak plainly, by your own.

These, sir, are the arguments I have to plead with you, and which I have selected out of many more.—And now give me leave seriously to ask you, as in the presence of God, whether there be not, on the whole, an unanswerable force in them? And if there is

what follows, but that you immediately yield to that force, and set up family worship this very day. For methinks I would hardly thank you for a resolution to do it to-morrow, so little do I expect from that resolution. How can you excuse yourself in the continued omission? Bring the matter before God. He will be the final Judge of it, and if you cannot debate the question, as in his presence, it is a sign of a bad cause, and of a bad heart too, which is conscious of the badness of the cause, and yet will not give it up, nor comply with a duty, of your obligations to which you are secretly convinced, while, in effect, you say, "I will go on in this sin, and venture the consequence." Oh! it is a dreadful venture, and will be found provoking the Lord to jealousy; as if you were stronger than he, 1 Cor. x. 22.

God is represented as giving this reason to his angels for a particular favour to be bestowed on Abraham: "I know that he will command his children and household to keep the way of the Lord, that he may obtain the blessing promised," Gen. xviii. 19. Did he not hereby intend to declare his approbation of the care which Abraham took to support religion in his family? And can it be supported in a total neglect of prayer? Again, Do you not in your conscience think, that the Spirit of God meant that we should take Joshua for an example, when he tells us that he resolved, (and publicly declared the resolution,) that he and his house would serve the Lord, Josh. xxiv. 15. which must express a religious care of his family too?—Do you not believe that this blessed Spirit meant it as a commendation of Job that he offered sacrifices for all his children, Job i. 5. sacrifices undoubtedly attended with prayers; when he feared lest the gaiety of their hearts, in their successive feastings, might have betrayed them into some moral evil?—And was it not to do an honour to David, that the scripture informs us, that "he went home to bless his household," 2 Sam. vi. 20. that is, to perform some

solemn act of domestic worship, when he had been spending the whole day in public devotion? And do you think, when our blessed Lord, whose life was employed in religious services, so frequently took his disciples apart to pray with them, that he did not intend this as an example to us, of praying with those under our special care, or, in other words, with the members of our own family, who are most immediately so? Or can you, by any imaginable artifice, delude yourself so far as to think, that when we are solemnly charged and commanded to pray "with all prayer and supplication," Eph. vi. 18. this kind of prayer is not included in that apostolic injunction?

Were there not one praying family in the whole world, methinks it should instigate you to the practice, rather than tempt you to neglect it; and you should press on, as ambitious of the glory of leading the way. For what could be a nobler object of ambition, than to be pointed out by the blessed God himself, as Job was; of whom he said, with a kind of triumph, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the land, or even on the earth?" Job i. 8. But, blessed be God, the neglect we have supposed, is far from being universal. Let it, however, rejoice us, if God may say, "There are such and such families, distinguishable from those in their neighbourhood on this account: as prevalent as the neglect of family prayer is, they have the resolution to practise it, and, like my servant Daniel, fear not the reproach and contempt which profane and ungodly men may cast upon them, if they may but honour me, and engage my favour. I know them; I hearken and hear, and a book of remembrance is written before me for them that fear me, and think on my name."

Say not, you have no time. How many hours in a week do you find for amusement, while you have none for devotion in your family? And do you indeed hold the blessing of God so very cheap, and

think it a matter of so little importance, that you conclude your business must succeed the worse if a few minutes are daily taken to implore it before your family? Let me rather admonish you that the greater your business is, the more need you have to pray earnestly that your hearts may not be engrossed by it. And I would beg leave further to remind you, that if your hurry of business were indeed so great as the objection supposes, (which I believe is seldom the case,) prudence alone might suggest, that you should endeavour to contract it. For there are certain boundaries, beyond which a wise and faithful care cannot extend; and as an attempt to go beyond these boundaries has generally its foundation in avarice, it often has its end in poverty and ruin. But if you were ever so secure in succeeding for this world, how dearly might you and your children pay for that success if all the blessed consequences of family religion, for time and for eternity, were to be given up as the price of that very small part of your gains which is owing to the minutes you take from these exercises, that you may give them to the world! For you plainly perceive the question is only about them, and by no means about a strenuous application to the proper duties of your secular calling through the day. And if you will be rich upon such profane terms as are here supposed, (for truly I can call them no better than profane,) you will probably plunge yourself into final perdition, and may in the mean time pierce yourself through with many sorrows, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. while religious families learn, by happy experience, that the blessing of the Lord, which they are so often imploring together, "maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it," Prov. x. 22. or that "a little with the fear of the Lord is better than great treasure," with that intermingled trouble, Prov. xv. 16. which in the neglect of God must necessarily be expected.

As for ability, where the heart is rightly disposed, it does not require any uncommon abilities to

discharge family worship in a decent and edifying manner. "The heart of a wise and good man, in this respect teacheth his mouth, and addeth knowledge to his lips," Prov. xvi. 23. "and out of the fulness of it, when it is indeed full of pious affections, the mouth will naturally speak," Luke vi. 45. There is no need at all of speaking elegantly. The plainest and simplest language, in addresses to the Majesty of heaven, appears to me far preferable to laboured, pompous, and artificial expressions. Plain, short sentences, uttered just as they rise in the mind, will be best understood by those who join with you; and they will be more pleasing to God than any thing which should proceed from ostentation and parade.

I must also desire you to consider, how many helps you may easily procure. The scripture is a large and noble magazine of the most proper sentiments, and most expressive language; which, if you will attend to with a becoming regard, will soon furnish you for this good work. We have, too, in our language, a great variety of excellent forms of prayer for families, as well as for private persons; which you may use, at least at first, with great profit. And if it is too laborious for you to learn them by heart, or if having learnt them, you dare not trust your memory, what should forbid your reading them reverently and devoutly? I hope the main thing is, that God be reverently and sincerely adored, that suitable blessings, temporal and eternal, be sought from him for ourselves and others, and cordial thanksgivings returned to him for the various gifts of his continual bounty. I know, in a great variety of instances, that it is very possible for christians of no extraordinary genius, and with a very low education, to acquit themselves honourably in prayer without the assistance of forms; and they who at first need them may, and probably, if they seriously set about it, would, soon outgrow that need. But if they did not, God might be

glorified, and families edified, by the continued use of such helps.

If opposition be made in your family, you ought to let any in whom you discover it know that your measures are fixed, and that you cannot and will not resign that just authority which the laws of God and man give you in your own house, to their unhappy temper, or daring impiety. Make the trial whether they will dare to break with you, rather than submit to so easy a condition as that of being present at your hours of family worship. If it be a servant that disputes it, you will, no doubt, think it a great blessing to your family to rid it of so detestable a member in that relation. And if a child grown up to years, that should be years of discretion, should set himself against this reformation, though it is certain that, wherever such a son of Belial be, he must be a great grief to your heart, you will be delivered from a great deal of distress which the sight of his wickedness must daily give you, by refusing him a place in your own family, which he would only disgrace and corrupt, and leaving him to practise those irregularities and scandals which always go along with such a presumptuous contempt of religion, any where else rather than under your own roof.

May God give you resolution immediately to make the attempt! And may he assist and accept you, and pour down every desirable blessing of providence and of grace on you and yours! So that this day may become memorable in your lives, as a season from whence you may date a prosperity and a joy hitherto unknown, how happy soever you may have been in former years; for, very imperfect, I am sure, must that domestic happiness be in which domestic religion has no part.

But if, after all, you will not be persuaded, but will hearken to the voice of cowardice and sloth, and irreligion, in defiance of so many awakening and affecting reasons you must answer for it at last. If

your children and servants grow up in the neglect of God, and pierce your hearts with those sorrows which such servants, and especially such children, are likely to occasion; if they raise profane and profligate families; if they prove the curse of their country, as well as the torment and ruin of those most intimately related to them; the guilt is in part yours, and (I repeat it again) you must answer it to God at the great day, that you have omitted the proper and appointed method of preventing such fatal evils. In the mean time you must answer the omission to your own conscience; which probably has not been easy in former days, and in future days may yet be more unquiet. Yes, sir, the memory of this address may continue to torment you, if it cannot reform you: and if you do not forsake the house of God, as well as exclude God and his worship from your own house, you will meet with new wounds; for new exhortations and admonitions will arm reflection with new reproaches. And in this uncomfortable manner you will probably go on, till what has been the grief and shame of your life, become the affliction of your dying bed; nor dare I presume to assure you that God will answer your last cries for pardon. The best you can expect under the consciousness of this guilt, is to pass trembling to your final doom. But whatever that doom be, you must acquit the friend who has given you faithful warning; and this address, transcribed as it were in the records of the Divine omniscience, shall testify, that a matter of so great importance has not been kept out of your view, nor slightly urged on your conscience.

HYMN.

Blest are the sons of peace,
Whose hearts and hopes are one;
Whose kind designs to serve and please
Through all their actions run.

Blest is the pious house,
Where zeal and friendship meet;
Their songs of praise, their mingled vows,
Make their communion sweet.

Thus when on Aaron's head,
They pour'd the rich perfume,
The oil through all his raiment spread,
And pleasure fill'd the room.

Thus on the heavenly hills
The saints are blest above,
Where joy like morning dew distils,
And all the air is love. WATTS.

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"IT IS TEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO."

"IT is ten thousand years ago!"—Reader, where will you be, when, in reference to the scenes of the present world, you will have to utter these words? "Ten thousand years!" how vast such a duration seems! So many years have not passed since our first parents were created. You have lived but a few short years, yet a period will come, when you shall have lived thus long in the unseen world. Perhaps you look back on events that took place ten, or twenty years ago, and even these are of small importance. How little the pleasure you enjoyed, or the pain you suffered, twenty years ago, now concerns you! but what will be your estimate of present things, and what your feelings, when all the events of mortal life shall be seen at the distance of a hundred centuries, and when of all that here interested, pained, or pleased, you will have to say, "It is ten thousand years ago!"

Come, look forward to that distant period, and think of views and feelings that will be cherished then.

Survey the present world. How brightly shines its sun! How fair and lovely are the bloom and verdure of spring, the richness of summer, and the abundance of autumn! How glorious the splendours of the noonday sun, and the softer splendours of a star-light night! What will all this be to you, when you may say, "I saw that sun with pleasure, and that starry firmament. Spring, summer, and autumn I welcomed with delight, but it is ten thousand years ago since, for the last time, I beheld earth, sun, and moon, and saw the changing seasons pass along."

Think of the charms of domestic life; a mother's fondness and a father's affection Think of the marriage union, with all its tender anxieties, and all its pleasures; of the friendly fire-side, of the social home, where the weary rested, and comfort dwelt. All has long ended. Of every

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domestic delight and anxiety you may say, "It is ten thousand years ago since I left my long-loved home, to enter it no more, since I formed one of an affectionate circle there, smiled when they smiled, and sorrowed when they wept. The last of those smiles was lighted up, and the last of those tears was dropped, ten thousand years ago."

Think of the scenes of public agitation, the strife of parties, the tumult of nations. All will long have ceased, and events that now agitate millions will be faintly remembered, and utterly disregarded, while of each it may be said, "It is ten thousand years ago."

Think of the day of death. You have to die. Your heart must throb for the last time, and your spirit struggle with the agonies of dissolving nature. After this you will lie a lifeless corpse, and soon, among the ruins and silence of the grave, be quite forgotten. Ages will roll along, but at length will come the period when you may say, "It is ten thousand years since I lay languishing in pain on the bed of death, since the last struggle came, and my spirit quitted its clay-built tabernacle till the resurrection morning. That hour, so long dreaded, has long gone by, even my dying hour is now ten thousand years ago."

The solemnities of eternal judgment are now before you. "The Lord himself will descend from heaven." "The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Before the King "will be gathered all nations," and he will pronounce the final doom of all. At length that great day will close. Eternity will roll along till you will have to exclaim, even of the judgment day, "It is ten thousand years ago. Ten thousand years ago I stood before the Judge's awful bar, I heard Him welcome the blest, and doom the lost to utter misery. I heard the triumphant anthems of the saved, and the shrieks and wailings of the condemned. Ten thousand years have passed since the Judge left his judgment-throne, and ascended with his saints to heaven, and since the dark prison of despair closed for ever on all his foes."

The sincere Christian may apply these solemn considerations to the trials of the spiritual pilgrimage. Reader, is your heart right with God? Is your soul committed to the Saviour's care, and your heart unfeignedly consecrated to him? If so, you are a Christian, and doubtless are acquainted with a Christian's trials. But what will these appear at that solemn period to which your thoughts are

here directed? "Ten thousand years ago I was a wanderer in that long vanished world. Amidst its snares and delusions I struggled after Christ. Many were my conflicts, many my doubts and fears, many were my sorrows, though many my comforts. Often did I mourn the imperfections I felt in all I was, and saw in all I did. Often did I deplore the evil I felt within, and sorrow for the ravages of sin I witnessed all around. But all has long since ceased. Ten thousand years have hasted by since I ended my last conflict, endured my last sorrow, and struggled with my latest foe. A hundred centuries have passed since I left the church below, but they have known no fear, no pain, no conflict. My latest grief, my latest toil, was ten thousand years ago."

If you are not a sincere disciple of the Saviour; if you love the world, it will leave you, and the period will come when you may look back upon it as the scene of your sin and folly ten thousand years before. At that awful distance mercies that have long since ended may be reviewed. Sabbaths and religious privileges, the invitations of the Saviour, and the displays of his pardoning love, that ceased ten thousand years ago, are remembered with unavailing remorse. The last invitation that struck on your ear was ten thousand years before. The last offers of pardoning love have ceased for a hundred centuries. Oh, what is the condition of a sinful and ruined, but immortal being, that has to exclaim, "I had sabbaths, but the last departed unimproved ten thousand years ago, and then ended the last of numerous privileges that might have led me to the Giver of immortal life! The Spirit long strove with me, but for ten thousand years has ceased to strive. The Father long pitied me, but the last rejected offer of his pity was ten thousand years ago. The Saviour had compassion on me, and proffered heavenly blessings to me, but the last proffer of his salvation I rejected, and the last has ended for ten thousand years. Christians prayed for me, though I prayed not, but the last prayer offered for me was ten thousand years ago, and even that was in vain."

Reader, when that solemn period comes, where will you have spent those ten thousand departed years? Will it have been amidst the brightness and blessedness of heavenly joy, or the gloom and darkness of despair? Will you long have praised redeeming love with the triumphant spirits of the just, or long have bewailed and cursed the sin and mad-

ness of irreligion in the prison of the lost? Will the bright unsullied day of heaven have been gliding peacefully and rapturously over you, or will you have been wailing and cursing those ten thousand years away, where hope never enters, and peace never comes? One or the other will have been your lot.

When the pains and pleasures of mortal life shall thus long have ended, when its losses and its riches shall have long passed away; when thus, if you are a child of God, ten thousand years of the unbroken calm of heaven shall have succeeded the feverish dream of life, or, if you are destitute of the Saviour's grace, ten thousand years of wailing and despair shall have followed the few vain moments of worldly pleasure, what will then be your prospects? Eternity is stamped upon them all, whatever be their nature. Eternity! Eternity! Life or death to eternity! heaven or hell to eternity! The love or the wrath of Jehovah to eternity! All the riches of salvation, or all the poverty of utter ruin to eternity! And in eternity a period will arrive when the language on which we have meditated will be inexpressive,—when ten thousand years will bear no more proportion to the immense duration that will have elapsed since you left the world, than a moment bears to all those years; when events that took place ten thousand years before, will seem but at the distance of the twinkling of an eye, compared with the mighty ages that you will have spent in bliss or woe. Then, instead of having to say, "It is ten thousand years since I left the world, since I felt my last sorrow, or enjoyed my last delight," you will have to exclaim, "Years, countless as the sands that formed the bed of earth's oceans, have departed since heaven became my home, and still eternal day fears no eclipse;" or, "Years, numberless as the drops that formed those oceans, have rolled away since hell became my prison, and still the gloom of eternal night admits no ray of cheering hope." O reader, this is no fiction, but solemn truth, for God's holy word affirms, that eternal life or eternal punishment awaits every human being. Flee, therefore, to Jesus, and be blessed for ever.

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A THOUSAND YEARS FOR EVERY MOMENT.

"A THOUSAND years for every moment!" What does this mean? It means that a thousand years await you, in the eternal world, for every moment you pass in this. But can this be? Strange as it seems, it can, it must be so; for eternity is yours.

God's holy word, which never deceives, declares, that an eternal existence will be the lot of every human being. It represents eternal life as the happy portion of the righteous, John iii. 16; vi. 40—47; x. 27, 28; Matt. xxv. 46; 2 Cor. v. 1, &c.; and affirms, that death shall not hurt them a second time, but shall be swallowed up in victory, 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54; Rev. xxii. 3; John xi. 25, 26; Rev. ii. 11. These and many other passages assert the cheering truth, that the faithful Christian, having passed through the valley of the shadow of death, and entered his heavenly rest, shall never die again.

With equal plainness the great God reveals to us, in his word, that a state of everlasting misery awaits the impenitent and unconverted. The ungodly shall be driven into hell, where they are separated from happiness by an impassable gulf, Luke xvi. 26; their punishment is "everlasting punishment," "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41—46. And five times, in one short discourse, the Lord Jesus solemnly affirms, that that fire is not, and never shall be quenched, Mark ix. 43—48. Many other passages, in the sacred volume, unite with these in declaring, that an eternal existence awaits the unrighteous as well as the righteous, the lost as well as the saved.

Oh! what is eternity? No human, and, perhaps, no angelic mind can comprehend its vast extent. Take up a handful of the finest dust, that, raised by the wind, would float in the air, count the millions of particles in a single handful; then think that were the whole world changed into such dust, eternity has years far more countless than all the particles that would form its mighty mass.

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Suppose all the rivers and seas in this world were, in one moment, changed into ink, suppose every drop of that were to be employed in writing down figures, to number the years of eternity, when the oceans were emptied, and the last figure were written down, eternity would not be reckoned up. Its years would not be numbered. All the ages that might be written down would describe a period that has bounds, a duration that would have an end, but eternity is infinite, it has no end, and when years and ages, thus numberless beyond all thought and expression, were past, eternity would still be beginning.

Do you trust, and love, and follow Christ? then, Christian, think that you will have for every moment spent in his service here, a thousand years in the enjoyment of his love hereafter; for every moment devoted to prayer, a thousand years to be employed in rapturous praise; for every moment of painful conflict, a thousand years of joyous triumph; for every moment of weariness and toil, a thousand years of rest and peace. And all this to be enjoyed in heaven. A thousand years in heaven for every moment spent on earth. A thousand years in God's presence for every moment employed in seeking that ever-satisfying good; and, in the full enjoyment of this good, a thousand years with happy fellow-conquerors in the world of light, for every moment you struggled with them towards heaven, through the wilderness of this world. How blessed is the prospect!

Christian, think of this prospect. When sad, consider, more than a thousand years of happiness await me for every moment of my present sorrow. When tempted, think, a thousand years of rest and triumph will follow every moment of victorious conflict. When in pain and suffering, think, a thousand years of unbroken repose and joy will be given me for every moment of present pain; and that you may daily feel the littleness of this world and all its concerns, indulge the reflection, that a thousand years await you in eternity for every moment you may spend below.

But perhaps, reader, you are not a decided Christian; perhaps you are living a life of open sin; if not so, perhaps you are trifling with the Saviour, and neglecting the great salvation. If this be the case, God declares that you must repent or perish, Luke xiii. 5; be converted or condemned, Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 7; that you must turn or die, Ezek. xxxiii. 11; believe from the heart, or have the wrath

of God abide on you, John iii. 36: become holy, or never see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14. Should you continue to pursue a course of carelessness or more open sin, the dreadful ruin already mentioned will surely overtake you. Your sin will find you out. Compare, then, your gain and your loss, your present and your future condition. If you die unpardoned and unrenewed, for every moment of carelessness and irreligion here you will have a thousand years of remorse and utter despair; for every moment of sinful pleasure, a thousand years of unceasing torment; for every moment of foolish merriment, a thousand years of weeping and wailing. In short, for every moment of your life on earth, through which God, and Christ, and religion are neglected, a thousand years of punishment in hell.

A thousand years for every moment! Were this all, how solemn! how joyful! or how dreadful! How dreadful would be the folly of irreligion! how wise the choice of true religion! How poor and miserable the richest and gayest trifler! how blest and how rich the poorest and meanest heir of heaven! But, reader, a thousand years for every moment is unutterably below the solemn reality. More, far more, millions of times more, than a thousand years for every moment await you in the eternal world. Through so long a period, shall you rejoice or suffer there for every moment of your present life, that, compared with it, a thousand years would be instantaneous as the twinkling of an eye, and small as an atom compared to the universe. Reader, this awaits you. Deny it, and you become an infidel, for God asserts it, when he declares that every one is destined to eternity. Believe it, and must you not tremble at the sin and madness of suffering any interest, pleasure or pain, in this momentary state, to interfere with the pursuit of everlasting salvation?

If you have neglected that great salvation, O reader, pity yourself, and seek the Saviour now. Consider, that though more than a thousand years await you hereafter for every moment you spend here, yet that, in this brief span of mortal life, it must be decided whose you must be, and where you must be for ever. Eternity will take its character from time. If ever admitted to heaven, you must first be born again, but it must be now or never. If ever blessed with the love of God, you must repent and come to Christ, but it must be now or never. If you are now perishing, you may

find mercy; if unforgiven, you may obtain pardon; if without Christ, you may flee to him and find acceptance but it must be now or never. Now, many would help and bless you. The eternal Father is willing to receive you as a child; the Son of God is ready to pardon and save you; the Holy Ghost is willing to bestow his blessings on you, and the servants of God are ready to pray for you, and desire to help you; but not one moment after the close of this short life will one of these blessings be continued. The Father will cease to pity you; the Son to invite you; the Holy Spirit to strive with you; and the children of God to pray for you. Then, if you continue careless, how awful will be your condition! Even now it is dreadful, but what will it be soon? Now you are a sinner without a Saviour, but the dream of life will soon end, death comes, and you have no Saviour. The judgment day arrives with all its terrors, and you have no Saviour; the pit of misery opens for you, and you have no Saviour. Oh for a Saviour now. Eternity opens upon you, with all its unutterable solemnities and you have no Saviour. The time for seeking a Saviour is gone. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and you are not saved. Oh, shun such heart-breaking ruin, by seeking the Saviour now!

Let the Christian rejoice in the prospect before him. Believer, such is that eternal life which awaits you, that you shall not enjoy merely a thousand years of heavenly peace for every moment of earthly warfare, but every prayer shall find its answer in myriads of years of holy joy. Every sigh shall be followed by countless ages of delight; every reproach by long centuries of honour; and every pain, and every moment of sadness, by ten thousand ages of rapture and bliss: and even this is not the whole, but, compared with the reality, is like a drop to an ocean. How wonderful the grace that gives such a life! How infinite the obligations of the believer to Jesus Christ, through whose death and intercession eternal life becomes the gift of God!

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No. 412.

ETERNAL LIFE OR ETERNAL DEATH AWAITS YOU.

MANY ages ago the suffering patriarch, Job, exclaimed, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." More than three thousand years have passed since, in his case, this expectation has been realized. You, reader, are now sojourning, for a short time, on earth, but the patriarch's language applies to you, and you must soon go the way whence you will not return. But whither will that last journey conduct you? It leads to worlds very different from this. Solemn beyond expression are the prospects at its close.

> "Important journey! awful view!
> How great the change! the scenes how new!
> The golden gates of heaven display'd,
> Or hell's fierce flames, and gloomy shade!"

The happiness of heaven is unutterable. The righteous will be satisfied when they awake in their Redeemer's likeness, Psa. xvii. 15. The misery of hell is inconceivable. The Lord Jesus, that faithful and true Witness, represents a drop of water, to cool the tongue, tormented in those undying flames, as a boon earnestly coveted, but never gained, Luke xvi. 24. Whatever there be besides, to heighten heavenly happiness, its highest rapture springs from its being everlasting. And whatever there be besides, to add misery to the terrors of damnation, its deepest and most direful misery is caused by its being everlasting.

Reader, eternity awaits you! Eternal life or death is at hand, and one must certainly be yours. Eternity is a duration beyond calculation and comprehension. Look at the ground covered with innumerable millions of blades of grass, look at the leaves that clothe the trees with verdure, and the drops of morning dew; and what are these altogether compared to eternity? Repeat these numbers millions of times, yet were this done, the whole of the mighty sum would be insignificance and nothing, compared with eternity. And O reader, amidst the joys of salvation, or the miseries of perdition, this eternity awaits you.

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This truth is fully asserted in God's infallible word. That holy book declares that eternal existence awaits every child of man. Eternal life and happiness are frequently represented to be the future portion of the righteous. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son," 1 John v. 11. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. "My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish," John x. 27, 28. "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life," John vi. 40. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," John vi. 47. "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die," John xi. 25, 26. "The righteous shall go into life eternal," Matt. xxv. 46. "There shall be no more curse," Rev. xxii. 3. "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory," 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. v. 1. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out," Rev. iii. 12. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death," Rev. ii. 11. These are a few of the numerous proofs that immortal happiness is the portion of the righteous. They are given in varied language, and the truth is presented in different lights, but all show that eternal life is theirs.

With equal plainness and decision the Scriptures affirm that eternity, though a wretched eternity, awaits the impenitent and unconverted: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment," Matt. xxv. 31, 41, 46. "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the

presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 9. "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever," Rev. xiv. 11. "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8. "If thy hand offend* thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. If thy foot offend* thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. If thine eye offend* thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," Mark ix. 43—48. Is it possible for language to assert in plainer terms the dreadful truth, that eternal misery awaits the unrighteous? The same terms which represent the eternal duration of God, and the eternal life of the righteous, are employed to represent the everlasting duration of the misery of the lost; and not only so, but in language still more forcible and expressive than almost any single word, does the Lord Jesus repeatedly assert, that the fire of hell never shall be quenched.

How solemn in both these views is the prospect of eternity! Eternal life, or eternal death; eternal happiness, or eternal woe; eternal rapture, or eternal torment; eternal honour, or eternal shame; eternal holiness, or an eternal load of sin; eternal nearness to God, or eternal banishment from him; eternal communion with holy angels and happy saints, or eternal weeping, wailing, and despair, with Satan and accursed spirits. In these awfully opposite views eternity is before you, and can you trifle with its interests? Oh! if disposed to slight its great concerns, think what will be your views of such folly, when concerning all, for which you neglect eternal life, you shall have to say, It is ten thousand years since I possessed those poor

* The word "offend" may be translated, ensnare. The Saviour's meaning is—Part with any thing, however dear and valuable, and at whatever cost or pain, rather than lose eternal life

trifles, for which I ruined my soul. Or, if you are a Christian, when almost drooping under worldly trials, think how insignificant they will appear when, of the last of them, you shall exclaim, It is ten thousand years ago.

Christian, what encouragement you have for stedfast perseverance when you contemplate the mansions of peace, and the country of rest! "There remaineth a rest to the people of God," Heb. iv. 9. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," Col. iii. 4 "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing," 2 Tim. iv. 8. With such hopes, what a trifle is this world to me! its sorrows or its joys, its losses or its gains, are trifles alike! Therefore, my soul, be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for thy labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Reader, for eternal happiness nothing but an interest in the Lord Jesus can possibly prepare you. You are a sinner, you cannot deny it; "all have sinned," Rom. iii. 23. As a sinner you are by nature a child of wrath, Eph. ii. 3. A condemned creature, for, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10. The Lord Jesus declares, "Ye must be born again," John iii. 7. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Luke xiii. 5. The pardon and salvation you need, the Saviour is able and willing to give, for "Christ died for our sins," 1 Cor. xv. 3. By many precious invitations in his holy word, he bids you come to him, and be happy. He only can save you. If you slight him, all is lost; if you welcome him, all will be well. Flee then to him, and be blessed; to him commit your soul; devote your heart, and yield your all. And, O forget not to consider *what* you will be, and *where* you will be, when of earthly pleasures and pains, possessions and privileges, comforts and friendships, and even of life, death, and judgment, you have to say, They all are passed thousands of centuries ago.

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THE JUDGMENT TO COME.

THE apostle Paul, in addressing the Athenians, says, God "hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead," Acts xvii. 31. This solemn subject demands the attention of all, and of you, reader, among the number.

In the present state, God has not left us without evidence of his existence, and of his "eternal power and Godhead," though many of the human race fulfil the desires of their carnal hearts, and abuse his long-suffering and mercy, and thus treasure up to themselves "wrath against the day of wrath," and the revelation of his righteous indignation against sin, Rom. ii. 5. But God has not been an indifferent spectator of their actions. Their conduct has been strictly and impartially observed by Him; their deeds are recorded in the book of his remembrance, and in their own consciences, ready to be produced in evidence. In various passages of Scripture, we are assured that God will one day summon all mankind before his tribunal, demand an account of their stewardship, and judge them in righteousness according to their works.

In the present life, the ways of God often seem perplexing and unequal. Sometimes the wicked appear to be the most prosperous and happy. They pass their days in honour and affluence. They have apparently no bands in their death, but go down to their graves quite unconcerned, Psa. lxxiii. While, sometimes, those who fear God, and who are the salt of the earth, are chastened every morning, and tried every moment. They are often reviled and despised by the

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men of the world, and are subjected to their hatred, and perhaps to persecution. They are sometimes led, in desolation of heart, to exclaim, "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness," Psa. lxxxviii. 18; to weep for their children because they are not, or, in still deeper anguish, to mourn over those of their family who are walking in the broad way which leadeth to destruction. They are sometimes even tempted to exclaim, "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Psa. lxxvii. 9. But this state of things shall not always continue. The triumph of the wicked is but for a moment. He shall not stand in the judgment, nor appear in the congregation of the righteous. There shall be a day of complete redemption to all the servants of God; their broken hearts shall then be healed, their trials and afflictions be forgotten, their tears wiped away; they shall overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and shall be admitted to glory, honour, and immortality.

But now, as at the beginning, some are disposed to demand what assurance we have that all these things shall be fulfilled? To this it might be answered, that the justice of God requires it. Men are not in this world dealt with according to their works; and if this present scene constituted the beginning and the end of man, we should be forced to admit that the ways of the Lord were unequal; whence, we have reason to believe, that a state of retribution is awaiting the human family, when all the inequalities of the present scene will be set right, and an eternal separation be made between those who fear God, and those who disregard his law. It might also be argued, that our natural feeling of dependence on God, and accountableness to him, is an undoubted evidence, that he will one day call us before him in judgment. And when we feel that conscience sits in judgment on our thoughts, words, and actions, and approves or condemns our conduct, we have reason to believe, that God will one day publicly declare and call us to an account for the admonitions of this inward judge.

This day of final decision will come, though we know not when. The great white throne will be erected, and the archangel's voice will be heard, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." This great, this all-important event is fixed in the

counsels of the Eternal; the commission has been issued by Him who cannot lie, and will undoubtedly be accomplished. With Him "a thousand years are as one day, and one day is as a thousand years." God shall judge the world; he shal "judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained," Acts xvii. 31.

How infinitely important is this event to all! It is not one tribe, one nation, one order of men only, to whom it refers: it is the world that is to be judged; every individual, whatever his rank or condition in life, whether high or low, rich or poor, the friend or the enemy of God. The kings of the earth shall not, on that day, escape the judgment of God on account of their greatness; nor shall the meanest of their subjects then pass unnoticed. All mere worldly distinctions shall be disregarded by the Judge; for there is no respect of persons with him. None of the family of Adam shall be wanting; those who lived in the remotest periods of antiquity shall mingle with those who shall then be alive upon the earth, and who shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye. The man who died full of years and honour, and matured in knowledge and holiness, shall appear along with the babe, who, in one short step, finished the journey of life. Tribes of the earth most remote one from another in situation, and most dissimilar in colour, customs, and habits, shall then be gathered into one vast assembly; "For we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ," Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10.

This judgment shall extend to all our actions; darkness hideth not from God; he setteth our most secret thoughts in the light of his countenance; we can neither deceive him, nor alter his decisions. The conduct of every individual shall be examined, the sins he has committed, the blessings he has received, the means of grace he has enjoyed, the opportunities he has neglected, the warnings which have been given him by the word of truth, by the ministers of reconciliation, by the providential dispensations of God. Those who have not had a clear revelation of the will of God made to them, shall be judged by the opportunities they have had of becoming acquainted with that will, by the law "written in their hearts," Rom. ii. 15. He that knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. But those who have had mercy offered to them, who have had their Lord's will

made known to them in a well accredited revelation, and have not listened to it, shall be beaten with many stripes. The rewards bestowed, and the punishments inflicted, shall all be in exact accordance with truth and righteousness. The rewards conferred on the righteous will not be of debt, but of grace. The punishments of the wicked will not only be according to truth and justice, but shall be clearly seen to be so. In that day, all the mysterious dispensations of providence, and apparent inequalities of God's moral government, shall be fully vindicated; and the benevolent Creator shall then appear to a whole intelligent universe, as glorious in holiness as he is infinite in power.

In that day what will all worldly considerations avail us—our place in society, our poverty, our affluence, or the opinion which men entertain of us? All will weigh less in our estimation than the dust upon the balance. God shall then be seen to be all in all, and we shall then acknowledge that an interest in his favour is the only object worthy of the energies and affections of immortal beings.

We are informed not only that God shall judge the world in righteousness, but that he shall judge it "by that Man whom he hath ordained;" and doubtless this can be no other than Jehovah's Fellow, the Man of his right hand, for none else is judge but God. The highest created intelligence could not sustain the dignity of the tribunal of the universe, nor judge the secrets of all hearts. But Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, is equal to the high appointment; for He and his Father are one. The appointment of Christ, to be the Judge of the quick and the dead, proves the Divinity of his person, as well as the perfection of his mediatorial work—shows that he is the Mighty God, as truly as that he is the Child born, the Son given, the meek and lowly Redeemer of mankind. When on earth, clothed with our nature, he tenderly invited sinners to come to him; he beheld the devoted city of Jerusalem and wept over it; he meekly endured the insults of his enemies, stood as a criminal at the bar of Pilate, was arrayed in the robes of mock royalty, and heard his brethren, according to the flesh, demand his crucifixion; and when they had gratified their malice by nailing him to the cross, he prayed for his murderers, and endured the punishment due to our sins, till he could say, "It is finished." And will he, who thus humbled himself, be exalted to the throne of universal

dominion? Assuredly he will, for God "hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John v. 23. Now, by his Spirit, he strives with sinners; by his servants, he affectionately invites them still to come to him; they, in God's name, pray sinners to be reconciled to him; but then, he shall cease to appear in the character of a suffering Saviour; he shall no more entreat men by his Spirit and his word; he shall then sum up the present dispensation, issue the awful mandate that time shall be no longer, ascend the throne of eternal justice, and award to angels and men their final destinies. In the days of his long-suffering, patience, and forbearance, the glories of his grace and mercy have been displayed towards sinners. Then shall he display the glory of his justice and power; sin will then be seen to be as evil and as odious as the word of God has declared it to be; and death, even death eternal, shall be awarded as its just recompense. Impenitent beings will then be convinced, that their guilt and their ruin are derived from themselves, and that the just and proper wages of sin, is everlasting destruction from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power.

Though Christ humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, he foretold his resurrection; and, in the lowest depths of humiliation, he announced himself as the destined Judge of the universe. This being the case, the resurrection of Christ is a full, clear, and convincing proof of his being the destined Judge of the world; for had not Christ been what he declared himself to be, the Son of God, the Creator of the universe, the supreme and ultimate Judge of angels and men, God would not have raised him from the dead. But we have the fullest evidence that he did not leave his soul in the state of the dead, that he did not suffer his Holy One to see corruption. And, therefore, this great event is the most satisfactory evidence, that, at the appointed period, the Divine Redeemer shall raise from their graves the whole human race; that he shall separate them as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and he shall pronounce the irreversible sentence of acquittal, or of condemnation, finish the present dispensation of God's moral government, and establish the everlasting kingdom of holiness and peace.

What consolation is it to the followers of Christ, that he, who is their Kinsman and Redeemer, and who is still touched

with the feeling of their infirmities, is appointed to be the Judge of the world; that he, who intercedes in their behalf before the eternal throne, and who obtains every necessary blessing for them, has been exalted to the right hand of power; that they have contemplated him as a beseeching, suffering, bleeding, dying, Saviour, before they have been called to behold him as a just and omnipotent Judge; that in him the uncreated glories of Divinity are blended with the loveliest attributes of perfected humanity; that even in the midst of the throne, he appears as the Lamb that had been slain, bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh; and that, when he shall appear in his glory, to judge the world, they shall, according to his promise, "see him as he is," and be made like unto him.

Since Christ is the appointed Judge of the world, how should the wicked be alarmed Already he is invested with authority and power sufficient to crush all his enemies; and often has he visited them with signal destruction. Tremble, then, before him, all ye who disregard his law, all ye persecutors of his people, all ye neglecters and despisers of his salvation; and ere he ascend the throne of judgment, ere the decree go forth, let each fall prostrate at the footstool of his mercy, and implore that forgiveness which was never sought in vain. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31. Accept of Him now as thy Saviour, and thou shalt find favour with him in that day.

Shall the world be judged in righteousness, by Christ Jesus? Then "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" 2 Pet. iii. 11. Shall we then be tried and judged? and ought we not now to examine and try ourselves, to view all things in relation to this great, this final event? Sensible of the frailty of life, we should consider that we may now be on the very brink of eternity, and may soon be summoned to our great account, and have our eternal destiny awarded us, either in the world of perdition, among the enemies of God and holiness, or in his presence, where there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand where there are pleasures for evermore.

Ought not such awful, such pleasing prospects, to animate and cheer us in the path of obedience and duty, to warn and fortify us in the hour of temptation and trial, and to afford joy and consolation amidst the reproaches and per-

secutions of the present world? Yet a little while, and the trials of the Christian shall be over for ever. He shall lift up his head with joy; for "he that endureth to the end shall be saved," Matt. x. 22. He hath confessed the Saviour upon the earth, and the Saviour will confess and acknowledge him when he cometh in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Is not this a privilege worth striving for? is not this an object worthy of all our efforts? is not this a glory which throws all earthly distinctions into the shade? What are crowns and kingdoms when compared to this! yet this honour, these privileges, shall be the portion of all his saints. And if the prize appear too great for our attainment, when we think of the weakness of our nature, and the power of sin in our hearts, let us remember that we have an almighty Friend in that Divine and gracious Spirit, whose renewing and sanctifying influences are promised to all who ask them. Let us therefore "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," remembering that "it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure," Phil. ii. 12, 13.

And ought not the solemn thought, that all mankind, whether Christians or heathens, whether lovers or despisers of the Saviour, shall be judged by him at that day, to animate us with an ardent desire to promote the best, the everlasting interest of our fellow-men? Let none of us say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" but let us ever remember, that if we be Christians in deed and in truth, we are not our own, but "we are bought with a price," 1 Cor. vi. 20; that "none liveth to himself," Rom. xiv. 7; and that if the weakest and least influential among us neglect to improve the opportunities which God is affording us for promoting the salvation of others, the blood of our brother, even his soul, will then be required at our hand.

Let all, therefore, who live and act under the belief of a judgment to come, be aroused to a vigorous activity in the great work of God's glory and man's salvation. The poorest, the most obscure Christian, has a talent, a trust committed to him, and can do something in forwarding the work of the Lord; and however the agent and the effort may be ridiculed by men, if it be made in faith, and in obedience to the Divine command, according to the means and opportunities afforded, it shall not be forgotten or despised. A mite cast into the treasury of heaven, a

cup of cold water given to a disciple, out of love to the Saviour, or a word spoken in season, shall not fail to obtain a gracious, a glorious reward, in the day when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever," Dan. xii. 3.

Great God! what do I see and hear!
The end of things created!
The Judge of mankind doth appear,
On clouds of glory seated.
The trumpet sounds; the graves restore
The dead which they contained before;
Prepare my soul, to meet him.

The dead in Christ shall first arise,
At the last trumpet's sounding,
Caught up to meet him in the skies,
With joy their Lord surrounding;
No gloomy fears their souls dismay;
His presence sheds eternal day
On those prepared to meet him.

But sinners, filled with guilty fears,
Behold his wrath prevailing;
For they shall rise, and find their tears
And sighs are unavailing:
The day of grace is past and gone;
Trembling they stand before the throne,
All unprepared to meet him.

Great God! what do I see and hear!
The end of things created!
The Judge of mankind doth appear
On clouds of glory seated:
Beneath his cross I view the day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
And thus prepare to meet him.

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HEAVEN LOST.

AS godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, and if we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then all other needful things shall be added unto us; so also the ungodly are threatened with the loss both of spiritual and temporal blessings: and because they sought not for God's kingdom and righteousness, therefore shall they lose both it and that which they did seek, and there shall be taken from them that which they have. If they could but have kept their present enjoyments, they would not have much cared for the loss of heaven. If they had lost and forsaken all for Christ, they would have found all again in him; for he would have been all and in all to them. But now they have forsaken Christ for other things, they shall lose Christ, and that also for which they forsook him; even the enjoyments of time—besides suffering the torments of hell.

Among the enjoyments of time, they shall particularly lose—their presumptuous belief of their interest in the favour of God, and the merits of Christ;—all their hopes;—all their false peace of conscience;—all their carnal mirth;—and all their sensual delights.

1. They shall lose their presumptuous belief of their interest in the favour of God, and the merits of Christ. This false belief now supports their spirits, and defends them from the terrors that would otherwise seize upon them. But what will ease their trouble, when they can believe no longer, nor rejoice any longer? If a man be near to the greatest mischief, and yet strongly imagine that he is in safety, he may be as cheerful as if all were well. If there were no more necessary to make a man happy than to believe that he is so, or shall be so, happiness would be far more common than it is likely to be. As true faith is the leading grace in the regenerate, so is false faith the leading vice in the unregenerate. Why do such multitudes sit still, when they might have pardon, but that they verily think

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they are pardoned already? If you could ask thousands in hell, what madness brought them thither, they would most of them answer, "We made sure of being saved, till we found ourselves damned. We should have been more earnest seekers of regeneration, and the power of godliness, but we verily thought we were Christians before. We have flattered ourselves into these torments, and now there is no remedy." Reader, I must in faithfulness tell thee, that the confident belief of their good state, which the careless, unholy, unhumbled multitude so commonly boast of, will prove in the end but a soul-damning delusion. There is none of this believing in hell. It was Satan's stratagem, that being blindfold they might follow him the more boldly; but then he will uncover their eyes, and they shall see where they are.

2. They shall lose also all their hopes. In this life, though they were threatened with the wrath of God, yet their hope of escaping bore up their hearts. We can now scarcely speak with the vilest drunkard, or swearer, or scoffer, but he hopes to be saved for all this. Oh, happy world, if salvation were as common as this hope! Nay, so strong are men's hopes, that they will dispute the cause with Christ himself at judgment, and plead their having eat and drank in his presence, and prophesied in his name, and in his name cast out devils; they will stiffly deny that ever they neglected Christ in hunger, nakedness, or prison, till he confutes them with the sentence of their condemnation. Oh the sad state of these men, when they must bid farewell to all their hopes! "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth," Prov. xi. 7. "The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost," Job xi. 20. The giving up the ghost is a fit but terrible resemblance of a wicked man's giving up his hopes. As the soul departeth not from the body without the greatest pain, so doth the hope of the wicked depart. The soul departs from the body suddenly, in a moment, which hath there delightfully continued so many years: just so doth the hope of the wicked depart. The soul will never more return to live with the body in this world; and the hope of the wicked takes an everlasting farewell of his soul. A miracle of resurrection shall again unite soul and body, but there shall be no such miraculous

resurrection of the hope of the damned. Methinks it is the most pitiable sight this world affords, to see such an ungodly person dying, and to think of his soul and his hopes, departing together. With what a sad change he appears in another world! Then if a man could but ask that hopeless soul, "Are you as confident of salvation as you were wont to be?" what a sad answer would be returned! Oh that careless sinners would be awakened to think of this in time! Reader, rest not till thou canst give a reason of all thy hopes, grounded upon Scripture promises; that they purify thy heart; that they quicken thy endeavours in godliness; that the more thou hopest the less thou sinnest, and the more exact is thy obedience.

There is a despair which is absolutely necessary for thy salvation. I would not have thee despair of the sufficiency of the blood of Christ to save thee, if thou believe and heartily obey him; nor yet absolutely of thy own salvation, because while there is life and time there is some hope of thy conversion, and so of thy salvation; but I would have thee despair of ever being saved, except thou be "born again;" or of seeing God without holiness; or of having part in Christ, except thou love him above father, mother, or thy own life. This kind of despair is one of the first steps to heaven. If a man be quite out of his way, what must be the first means to bring him in again? He must despair of ever coming to his journey's end in the way that he is in. If his home be eastward, and he is going westward, as long as he hopes he is right, he will go on; and as long as he goes on hoping, he goes further amiss: when he despairs of getting home, except he turn back, then he will return, and then he may hope. Just so it is, sinner, with thy soul: thou art borne out of the way to heaven, and hast proceeded many a year; thou goest on, and hopest to be saved, because thou art not so bad as many others. Except thou throw away these hopes, and see that thou hast all this while been quite out of the way to heaven, thou wilt never return and be saved. There is nothing in the world more likely to keep thy soul out of heaven than thy false hopes of being saved while thou art out of the way to salvation. See, then, how it will aggravate the misery of the damned, that, with the loss of heaven, they shall lose all that hope of it, which now supports them.

3. They will lose all that false peace of conscience,

which makes their present life so easy. Who would think, that sees how quietly the multitude of the ungodly live, that they must very shortly lie down in everlasting flames? They are as free from the fears of hell as an obedient believer; and for the most part have less disquiet of mind than those who shall be saved. Happy men, if this peace would prove lasting! But "when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape," 1 Thess. v. 3. Oh, cruel peace, which ends in such a war! The soul of every man by nature is Satan's garrison; all is at peace in such a man till Christ comes, and gives it terrible alarms of judgment and hell, batters it with the ordnance of his threats and terrors, forces it to yield to his mere mercy, and take him for the governor; then doth he cast out Satan, overcome him, take from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divide his spoils, Luke xi. 22; and then doth he establish a firm and lasting peace. If, therefore, thou art yet in that first peace, think not that it will endure. Can thy soul have lasting peace whilst in enmity with Christ? Can he have peace against whom God proclaims war? I wish thee no greater good, than that God break in upon thy careless heart, and shake thee out of thy false peace, and make thee lie down at the feet of Christ, and say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and so receive from him a better and surer peace, which will never be quite broken, but be the beginning of thy everlasting peace, and not perish in thy perishing, as the groundless peace of the world will do.

4. They shall lose all their carnal mirth. They will themselves say of their "laughter, It is mad and of their mirth, what doth it?" Eccl. ii. 2. It was out "as the crackling of thorns under a pot," Eccl. vii. 6. It made a blaze for a while, but it was presently gone, and returned no more. To talk of death and judgment was irksome to them, because it damped their mirth. They could not endure to think of their sin and danger, because these thoughts depressed their spirits. They knew not what it was to weep for sin, or to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. They could laugh away sorrow, and sing away cares, and drive away those melancholy thoughts. To meditate, and pray, they fancied, would be enough to make

them miserable or run mad. Poor souls! what a misery will that life be, where you shall have nothing but sorrow; intense, heart-piercing, multiplied sorrow; when you shall neither have the joys of saints, nor your own former joys. Do you think there is one merry heart in hell; or one joyful countenance, or jesting tongue? You now cry, "A little mirth is worth a great deal of sorrow." But, surely, a little godly sorrow, which would have ended in eternal joy, would have been worth much more than all your foolish mirth; for the end of such mirth is sorrow.

5. They shall also lose all their sensual delights. That which they esteemed their chief good, their heaven, their god, they must lose, as well as God himself. What a fall will the proud ambitious man have from the height of his honours! As his dust and bones will not be known from the dust and bones of the poorest beggar; so neither will his soul be honoured or favoured more than theirs. The rich man is there no more clothed in purple and fine linen, nor fareth sumptuously every day. There will then be no expecting the admiration of beholders. They shall spend their time in sadness, and not in sports and pastimes. What an alteration will they then find! The heat of their lust will be then abated. How will it even cut them to the heart to look each other in the face! What an interview will there then be, cursing the day that ever they saw one another! Oh that sinners would now remember, and say, "Will these delights accompany us into the other world? Will not the remembrance of them be then our torment? Shall we then take this partnership in vice for true friendship? Why should we sell such lasting, incomprehensible joys, for a taste of seeming pleasure? Come, as we have sinned together, let us pray together, that God would pardon us; and let us help one another toward heaven, instead of helping to deceive and destroy each other." Oh that men knew what they desire, when they would so fain have all things suited to the desires of the flesh! It is but to desire their temptations to be increased, and their snares strengthened.

Not only will some lose the enjoyments of time, but they will suffer the torments of hell. The exceeding greatness of such torments may appear by considering,—the supreme Governor who has appointed them;—the place or state of

torment;—that these torments are the fruit of Divine vengeance;—that Satan and sinners themselves shall be God's executioners;—that these torments shall be universal,—without mitigation,—and without end.

1. God being infinitely just as well as abundant in mercy, has himself appointed them. As it was no less than God whom sinners had offended, so it is no less than God who will punish them for their offences. He hath prepared those torments for his enemies. His continued anger will still be devouring them. His breath of indignation will kindle the flames. His wrath will be an intolerable burden to their souls. If it were but a creature with whom they had to do, they might bear it better. Woe to him that falls under the strokes of the Almighty! "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31. It were nothing, in comparison to this, if the world were against them, or if the strength of all creatures were united in one to inflict their penalty. They will now rather venture to displease God than displease a landlord, a customer, a master, a friend, a neighbour, or their own flesh; but then they will wish a thousand times in vain, that they had been hated of all the world, rather than have lost the favour of God. What a consuming fire is his wrath! If it be kindled here but a little, how do we wither like the grass! How soon doth our strength decay, and turn to weakness, and our beauty to deformity! The flames do not so easily run through the dry stubble, as the wrath of God will consume these wretches. They that could not bear a prison, or gibbet, or fire for Christ, nor scarce a few scoffs, how will they now bear the devouring flames of Divine wrath!

2. The place, or state of torment, is purposely ordained to glorify the justice of God. When God would glorify his power, he made the worlds. The comely order of all his creatures declareth his wisdom. His providence is shown in sustaining all things. When a spark of his wrath was kindled upon the earth, the whole world, except only eight persons, were drowned; Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, were burnt with fire from heaven; the sea shut her mouth upon some, the earth opened and swallowed up others; the pestilence destroyed by thousands. What a standing witness of the wrath of God, is the present deplorable state of the Jews! Yet the glorifying the mercy and

justice of God is intended most eminently for the life to come. As God will then glorify his mercy in a way that is now beyond the comprehension of the saints that must enjoy it; so also will he manifest his justice to be indeed the justice of God. The everlasting flames of hell will not be thought too hot for the rebellious; and when they have there burned through millions of ages, he will not repent him of the evil which has befallen them.

3. The torments of the damned must be extreme, because they are the effect of Divine vengeance. When the great God shall say, "My rebellious creatures shall now pay for the abuse of my patience. Remember how I waited your leisure in vain—how I stooped to persuade and entreat you. Did you think I would always be so slighted?"—Then will he be revenged for every abused mercy, and for all their neglects of Christ and his grace. Wretched creatures! when he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour, Isa. xxvii. 11. As the Lord rejoiced over them to do them good; so the Lord will rejoice over them to destroy them, and to bring them to nought, Deut. xxviii. 63. He will laugh at their calamity; he will mock when their fear cometh; when their fear cometh as desolation, and their destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon them," Prov. i. 26, 27.

4. Consider that Satan and themselves shall be God's executioners. He that was here so successful in drawing them from Christ, will then be the instrument of their punishment for yielding to his temptations. That is the reward he will give them for all their service; for their rejecting the commands of God, and forsaking Christ; neglecting their souls at his persuasion. If they had served Christ as faithfully as they did Satan, he would have given them a better reward.—It is also most just, that they should be their own tormentors, that they may see that their whole destruction is of themselves; and then of whom can they complain but themselves?

5. Consider, also, that their torment will be universal. As all parts have joined in sin, so must they all partake in the torment. The soul, as it was the chief in sinning, shall be the chief in suffering, and as it is of a more excellent nature than the body, so will its torments far exceed bodily torments; and as its joys far surpass all

sensual pleasures, so the pains of the soul exceed corporeal pains. It is not only a soul, but a sinful soul that must suffer. Fire will not burn, except the fuel be combustible; but if the wood be dry, how fiercely will it burn. The guilt of their sins will be to damned souls like tinder to gunpowder, to make the flames of hell take hold upon them with fury.—The body must always bear its part. The body, which was so carefully looked to, so tenderly cherished, so curiously dressed, what must it now endure! How are its haughty looks now taken down! How little will those flames regard its comeliness and beauty! Those eyes, which were wont to be delighted with curious sights, must then see nothing but what shall terrify them; an angry God above them, with those saints whom they scorned, enjoying the glory which they have lost; and about them will be only devils and damned souls. How will they look back and say, "Are all our feasts, and games, and revels, come to this?" Those ears which were accustomed to music and songs, shall hear the shrieks and cries of their damned companions; children crying out against their parents, that gave them encouragement and example in evil; husbands and wives, masters and servants, ministers and people, magistrates and subjects, charging their misery one upon another, for discouraging in duty, conniving at sin, and being silent, when they should have plainly foretold the danger. Thus will soul and body be companions in woe.

6. Far greater will these torments be, because without mitigation. In this life, when they were told of hell, or conscience troubled their peace, they had comforters at hand; their carnal friends, their business, their company, their mirth. They could drink, play, or sleep away their sorrows. But now all these remedies are vanished. Their hard, presumptuous, unbelieving heart was a wall to defend them against trouble of mind. Satan was himself their comforter, as he was to our first mother: "Hath God said, ye shall not eat? ye shall not surely die. Doth God tell you that you shall lie in hell? It is no such matter. God is more merciful. Or if there be a hell, what need you fear it? Are not you Christians? Was not the blood of Christ shed for you?" Thus, as the Spirit of Christ is the Comforter of the saints, so Satan is the comforter of the wicked. Never was a thief more careful lest he should awake the people, when he is robbing the house, than Satan is not

to awaken a sinner. But when the sinner is dead, then Satan hath done flattering and comforting. Which way, then, will the forlorn sinner look for comfort? They that drew him into the snare, and promised him safety, now forsake him, and are forsaken themselves. His comforts are gone, and the righteous God, whose forewarnings he made light of, will now make good his word against him to the least tittle.

7. But the greatest aggravation of these torments will be, their eternity. When a thousand millions of ages are past, they are as fresh to begin as the first day. If there were any hope of an end, it would ease the damned to foresee it; but for ever, is an intolerable thought. They were never weary of sinning, nor will God be weary of plaguing. They never heartily repented of sin, nor will God repent of their suffering. They broke the laws of the eternal God, and therefore shall suffer eternal punishment. They knew it was an everlasting kingdom which they refused, and what wonder if they are everlastingly shut out of it? Their immortal souls were guilty of the trespass, and therefore must immortally suffer the pains. What happy men would they think themselves, if they might have lain still in their graves, or might but there lie down again! How will they call and cry, "O death! whither art thou now gone? Now come and cut off this doleful life. Oh that these pains would break my heart, and end my being! Oh that I might once at last die! Oh that I had never had a being!" These groans will the thoughts of eternity wring from their hearts. They were wont to think sermons and prayers long; how long then will they think these endless torments! What difference is there betwixt the length of their pleasures and their pains! The one continued but a moment, the other endureth through all eternity. Sinner, remember how time is almost gone. Thou art standing at the door of eternity; and death is waiting to open the door, and put thee in. Go, sleep out a few more nights, and move about a few more days on earth, and then thy nights and days shall end: thy thoughts, and cares, and pleasures, shall all be devoured by eternity; thou must enter upon the state which shall never be changed. As the joys of heaven are beyond our conception, so are the pains of hell. Everlasting torment is inconceivable torment.

But methinks I see the obstinate sinner desperately resolving, "If I must be damned, there is no remedy. Rather than I will live as the Scripture requires, I will put it to the venture; I shall escape as well as the rest of my neighbours, and we will even bear it as well as we can." Alas! poor creature, let me beg this of thee, before thou dost so flatly resolve, that thou wouldst lend me thy attention to a few questions, and weigh them with the reason of a man. Who art thou, that thou shouldst bear the wrath of God? Art thou a god, or a man? What is thy strength? Is it not the strength of wax, or stubble, to resist the fire; or as chaff to the wind; or as dust before the fierce whirlwind? If thy strength were as iron, and thy bones of brass; if thy foundation were as the earth, and thy power as the heavens, yet shouldst thou perish at the breath of his indignation: how much more, when thou art but a piece of breathing clay, kept a few days from being eaten with worms, by the mere support and favour of Him whom thou art thus resisting?

Why dost thou tremble at the signs of almighty power and wrath? At claps of thunder, or flashes of lightning; or that unseen power which rends in pieces the mighty oaks, and tears down the strongest buildings; or at the plague when it rageth around thee? If thou hadst seen the plagues of Egypt, or the earth swallow up Dathan and Abiram; or Elijah bring fire from heaven to destroy the captains and their companies, would not any of these sights have daunted thy spirits? How, then, canst thou bear the plagues of hell? Why art thou dismayed with such small sufferings as befall thee here? A tooth-ache; a fit of the gout, or stone; the loss of a limb; or falling into beggary and disgrace? And yet all these laid together will be one day accounted a happy state, in comparison of that which is suffered in hell. Why does the approach of death so much affright thee? Oh, how cold it strikes to the heart! And would not the grave be accounted a paradise, compared with that place of torment which thou slightest? Is it an intolerable thing to burn part of the body, by holding it in the fire? What, then, will it be to suffer ten thousand times more for ever in hell? Why does the thought or mention of hell occasion any disquiet in thy spirits? And canst thou endure the torments themselves? Why doth the rich man complain to Abraham of his torment in hell?

or thy dying companions lose their courage, and change their haughty language? Didst thou never see or speak with a man under despair? How uncomfortable was his talk! How burdensome his life! Nothing he possessed did him good: he had no sweetness in meat or drink: the sight of friends troubled him: he was weary of life, and fearful of death. If the misery of the damned can be endured, why cannot a man more easily endure these foretastes of hell? How wilt thou endure to live for ever, where thou shalt have no other company but devils and the damned, and shalt not only see them, but be tormented with them and by them?

Let me once more ask, If the wrath of God be so light, why did the Son of God himself make so great a matter of it? When he who was perfectly innocent himself, had taken upon him the payment of our debt, and stood in our room, and bore that punishment which we had deserved, it made him sweat "as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The Lord of life cried, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." And on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Surely, if any one could have borne these sufferings easily, it would have been Jesus Christ. He had another measure of strength to bear it than thou hast. Woe to thee, sinner, for thy mad security! Dost thou think to find that tolerable to thee, which was so heavy to Christ? Nay, the Son of God is cast into a bitter agony and bloody sweat, only under the curse of the law; and yet thou, feeble, foolish creature, makest nothing to bear also the curse of the gospel, which requires a "much sorer punishment," Heb. x. 29. The good Lord bring thee to thy right mind by repentance.

And now, reader, I demand thy resolution, What use wilt thou make of all this? Shall it all be lost to thee? or wilt thou consider it in good earnest: thou hast cast away many a warning of God, wilt thou do so by this also? Take heed, God will not always stand warning and threatening. The hand of vengeance is lifted up, the blow is coming, and woe to him on whom it lighteth! Dost thou throw away the tract, and say, it speaks of nothing but hell and damnation? Thus thou usest also to complain of the preacher. But wouldst thou not have us tell thee of these things? Should we be guilty of the blood of thy

soul, by keeping silent that which God hath charged us to make known? Wouldst thou perish in ease and silence, and have us to perish with thee, rather than displease thee, by speaking the truth? If thou wilt be guilty of such inhuman cruelty, God forbid we should be guilty of such sottish folly. This kind of preaching or writing is the ready way to be hated; and the desire of applause is so natural, that few delight in such a displeasing way. But consider, are these things true, or are they not? If they were not true, I would heartily join with thee against any that frighten people without a cause. But if these threatenings be the word of God, what a wretched being art thou that wilt not hear it, and consider it! If thou art one of the people of God, this doctrine will be a comfort to thee, and not a terror. If thou art yet unregenerate, methinks thou shouldst be as fearful to hear of heaven as of hell, except the bare name of heaven or salvation be sufficient. Preaching heaven and mercy to thee is entreating thee to seek them, and not reject them; and preaching hell is but to persuade thee to avoid it. If thou wert quite past hope of escaping it, then it were in vain to tell thee of hell; but as long as thou art alive, there is hope of thy recovery, and therefore all means must be used to awake thee from thy lethargy.

Alas! what heart can now possibly conceive, or what tongue express the pains of those souls that are under the wrath of God! Then, sinners, you will be crying to Jesus Christ, "O mercy! O pity, pity, on a poor soul!" Why, I do now, in the name of the Lord Jesus, cry to thee, "O have mercy, have pity, man, upon thy own soul!" Shall God pity thee, who wilt not be entreated to pity thyself? If thy horse see but a pit before him, thou canst scarcely force him in; and wilt thou so obstinately cast thyself into hell, when the danger is foretold thee? Who can stand before the indignation of the Lord? and who can abide the fierceness of his anger? Nahum i. 6. Methinks thou shouldst need no more words, but presently cast away thy soul-damning sins, and wholly deliver up thyself to Christ. May the Lord persuade thy heart to strike this covenant without any longer delay! But if thou be hardened unto death, and there be no remedy, yet say not another day but that thou wast faithfully warned, and hadst a friend, that would fain have prevented thy damnation.

Now, reader, consider,—God is in earnest with you; and why should not you be so with him? In his commands, his threatenings, his promises, he means as he speaks. In his judgments, he is serious. Was he not so when he drowned the world? When he consumed Sodom and Gomorrah? And when he scattered the Jews? Is it time, then, to trifle with God?—Jesus Christ was serious in purchasing our redemption. In teaching, he neglected his meat and drink. In prayer, he continued all night. In doing good, his friends thought him beside himself. In suffering, he fasted forty days, was tempted, betrayed, spit upon, buffeted, crowned with thorns, sweat drops of blood, was crucified, pierced, died: there was no jesting in all this. And should not we be serious in seeking our own salvation?—The Holy Spirit is serious in soliciting us to be happy. His motions are frequent, pressing, and importunate. He striveth with us. He is grieved when we resist him. And should not we be serious then in obeying and yielding to his motions?—God is serious in hearing our prayers, and bestowing his mercies. He is afflicted with us. He regardeth every groan and sigh, and puts every tear into his bottle. The next time thou art in trouble, thou wilt beg for a serious regard to thy prayers. And shall we expect real mercies, when we are slight and superficial in the work of God?—The ministers of Christ are serious in exhorting and instructing you. They beg of God, and of you; and long more for the salvation of your souls than for any worldly good. If they kill themselves with their labour, or suffer martrydom for preaching the gospel, they think their lives are well bestowed, so that they prevail for the saving your souls. And shall other men be so painful and careful for your salvation, and you be so careless and negligent of your own?—How diligent and serious are all the creatures in serving you! What haste makes the sun to compass the world! The fountains are always flowing for thy use; the rivers still running; spring and harvest keep their times. How hard does thy ox labour for thee from day to day! How speedily does thy horse travel with thee! And shalt thou only be negligent? Shall all these be so serious in serving thee, and thou so careless in thy service to God?—The servants of the world and the devil are serious and diligent. They work as if they could never do enough. They make haste, as if afraid of coming to hell too late. They bear

down ministers, sermons, and all before them. And shall they be more diligent for damnation than thou for salvation? Hast thou not a better Master, sweeter employment, greater encouragements, and a better reward?—Time was, when thou wast serious thyself in serving Satan and the flesh, if it be not so yet. How eagerly didst thou follow thy sports thy evil company, and sinful delights! And wilt thou not now be as earnest and violent for God?—You are to this day in earnest about the things of this life. If you are sick, or in pain, what serious complaints do you utter! If you are poor, how hard do you labour for a livelihood! And is not the business of your salvation of far greater moment?—There is no jesting in heaven or hell. The saints have a real happiness, and the damned a real misery. There are no remiss or sleepy praises in heaven, nor such lamentations in hell. All there are in earnest. When thou, reader, shalt come to death and judgment, oh what deep, heart-piercing thoughts wilt thou have of eternity! Methinks I foresee thee already astonished, to think how thou couldst possibly make so light of these things. Methinks I even hear thee crying out of thy stupidity and madness.

And darest thou go on in thy common careless course, against the plain evidence of reason, and commands of God, and against the light of thy own conscience? Darest thou live as loosely, sin as boldly, and pray as seldom as before? Darest thou profane the sabbath, slight the service of God, and think of thine everlasting state as carelessly as before? Or dost thou not rather resolve to gird up the loins of thy mind, and set thyself wholly to the work of thy salvation, and break through the oppositions, and slight the scoffs and persecutions of the world, and lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset thee, and run with patience the race that is set before thee? I hope these are thy full resolutions. Yet, because I know the obstinacy of the heart of man, and because I am solicitous thy soul might live,—I once more entreat thy attention to the following questions; and I command thee from God, that thou stifle not thy conscience, nor resist conviction; but answer them faithfully, and obey accordingly. If, by being diligent in godliness, you could grow rich, get honour or preferment in the world, be recovered from sickness, or live for ever in prosperity on earth; what lives would you lead, and what pains would you take in the service of God! And

is not the saint's rest a more excellent happiness than all this? If it were felony to break the sabbath, neglect secret or family worship, or be loose in your lives, what manner of persons would you then be! And is not eternal death more terrible than temporal? If God usually punished with some present judgment every act of sin, as he did the lies of Ananias and Sapphira, what kind of lives would you lead! And is not eternal wrath far more terrible? If one of your acquaintance should come from the dead, and tell you, that he suffered the torments of hell for those sins you are guilty of; what manner of persons would you afterwards be! How much more should the warnings of God affright you? If you knew that this were the last day you had to live in the world, how would you spend it? And you know not but it may be your last, and are sure your last is near. If you had seen the general dissolution of the world, and all the pomp and glory of it consumed to ashes, what would such a sight persuade thee to do? Such a sight you shall certainly see. If you had seen the judgment seat, and the books opened, and the wicked stand trembling on the left hand of the Judge, and the godly rejoicing on the right hand, and their different sentences pronounced, what persons would you have been after such as sight? This sight you shall one day surely see. If you had seen hell open, and all the damned there in their ceaseless torments; also heaven opened, as Stephen did, and all the saints there triumphing in glory; what a life would you lead after such sights! These you will see before it be long. If you had lain in hell but one year, or one day, or hour, and there felt the torments you now hear of; how seriously would you then speak of hell, and pray against it! And will you not take God's word for the truth of this, except you feel it? Or if you had possessed the glory of heaven but one year; what pains would you take rather than be deprived of such incomparable glory. Thus I have said enough, if not to stir up the sinner to a serious working out his salvation, yet at least to silence him, and leave him inexcusable at the judgment of God. Only, as we do by our friends when they are dead, and our words and actions can do them no good, yet to testify our affections for them we weep and mourn; so will I also do for these unhappy souls. It makes my heart tremble to think how they will stand before the Lord confounded and speechless! When

he shall say, "Was the world, or Satan, a better friend to you than I? Or had they done for you more than I had done? Try now whether they will save you, or recompense you for the loss of heaven, or be as good to you as I would have been." What will the wretched sinner answer to any of this? But though man will not hear, we may hope in speaking to God. "O thou that didst weep and groan in spirit over a dead Lazarus, pity these dead and senseless souls, till they are able to weep and groan in pity to themselves! As Thou hast bid thy servants speak, so speak now thyself; they will hear thy voice speaking to their hearts, who will not hear mine speaking to their ears. Lord, thou hast long knocked at their hearts in vain; now break the doors, and enter in."

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MY OWN WAY.

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MY OWN WAY.

THERE was one little cottage, near Cotman Deen, that attracted my attention; it had not the outward marks of any thing like expense, nor even those little indulgences which the poor can often with propriety afford themselves. But there was a neat little garden in front, the pink and carnation, thyme, daisies, and southernwood, were to be seen there; and roses surrounded the door. An aged female sat spinning before it.

Tired with my ramble, and delighted with the decent look of the place, I lifted the latch of the little gate that led into the garden, and going towards the seat at the door, asked the old woman if she would allow me to sit down, and rest a few minutes. She readily agreed, and we began to converse.

"You have a comfortable, quiet, little abode, in which to spend your old age," said I. She expressed her gratitude to God for it, and added, "It is indeed more than I deserve; for I have been a rebellious child to that God who has led me, these many years, in the wilderness."

"How old are you?" I asked.

"How old am I?—I have arrived at the end of our time here; my strength is labour and sorrow, as the wise man said, for I am fourscore years old."

"And can you not say that goodness and mercy have followed you all the days of your life?"

"Yes; they have followed me, gone before me, restrained, encouraged, and brought me to this last stage. I was young once, and like most, I *loved my own way;* but God, in mercy, generally imbittered it to me; and if I persisted in following it, after the sad consequences had been felt, he brought me back with weeping and supplication.

"My good old father and mother often told me, that I must learn to submit my will to the providence of God, but I heeded not their counsel as I ought; I loved the world and its gaieties, and never felt so well pleased as when finely dressed, and in the midst of light and thoughtless young people like myself. The wake, the fair, and every opportunity of village dissipation I eagerly embraced.

"Once, I remember, it was on a fine summer's day, my poor old father had gone to his work, and my mother was spinning as I may be now: it was fair day, and I was going there. I came down our little sloping staircase, very smartly attired for the holiday. My mother looked at me, from head to foot; I thought she seemed not quite pleased with my purpose, and yet felt a mother's pride in the appearance of her child.

"'Now you'll mind where you go, and with whom,' said she, 'and be sure you are home before dusk.'

"I met my companions, and in the fair a young man joined our party, who knew some amongst us. He was very attentive to me, and before I quitted the company I had become perhaps a little interested in him.

"He continued his attentions to me. My parents and friends spoke to me, and faithfully warned me of the danger of this connexion, but I was resolved to have *my own way;* and I persisted in it against the advice of my parents, the voice of conscience, and the dictates of common prudence. I trimmed my new hat with ribbons, and bought my new gown, and went to church to promise to honour and obey a man, whom certainly I loved as far as passion goes, but whom I could neither respect nor take for my guide through life.

"My poor old father and mother went home with us to a little cottage which my husband had decently furnished, and left us not till God's blessing had been implored.

"I thought now I should be quite happy, and that for once my mother would find *my own way* to be right. Things went on well at first; my husband brought me home his wages regularly, and as I laid them out as carefully as I knew how to do, we lived comfortably and put by a part. I added a little poultry; I sold my eggs, and reared chickens. I also prepared my husband's meals with neatness and comfort when he returned home from work.

"But still I loved *my own way*, and when it happened to oppose his wishes, I carried my point against all reason. At last my husband used to give up, but I thought he did not seem to love his home so well as before; he was always engaged to play at bowls, or quoits, with his shopmates, which at last I found was nothing but an excuse for going to the public-house. I felt discouraged, and asked why he

again gave way to sins he had so faithfully promised to avoid. He said he would mend; but continued to promise and relapse. I had indulged in many purchases of a useless and showy nature in my furniture and dress; but the approaching birth of my first infant led me to be more careful, and to save all I could, for my husband's wages, I found, were not all brought home to me as formerly. I felt joy in the prospect of becoming a mother; and a certainty that his babe would so take his attention, that my husband would be a changed character. The hour of my trial approached. My babe was a lovely little creature, and my husband also loved it; he was very proud of it, and liked to stand with it in his arms, and hear folks say, 'What a lovely child it is!'

"The wages were again brought in punctually, and then I felt sure that *my own way* was right.

"But in a few months 'My little son!' was an old story, and again he was constantly in the alehouse. About this time my baby was very ill; I had given up my poultry, and had therefore no store of my own to apply to. I wanted medicine for the child, which was expensive, and little preparations that were needful on such occasions · and now came the first pinch. I saw my babe languishing with heavy eye and feverish skin, and had not money to procure for him the little comforts which I thought would do him good. I flew into a passion with his father, and told him his conduct would kill his child and break my heart. He told me I might have had what I wanted but for my idleness in giving up my poultry-yard. This made me exceedingly angry, and a burst of tears was my only relief. I sat watching my infant through the night, and, solitary as I was, could not help acknowledging to myself that this was the sad effect of having *my own way*.

"But little Charles looked better at the glad return of morning—his eye was less heavy, his dimple and smile again sweetly cheered my anxious heart. I gave him his scanty breakfast of coarse fare, and he dosed off gently to sleep again.

"My gloom dispersed; I thought I should not care for any thing if he but lived. My wish was granted, and God spared the child of an ungrateful parent; and I once again saw him trying to attract the attention of his poor unhappy father.

"It was now with difficulty I could provide our table with food, and keep the remainder of our clothes tidy and whole. But the reflections I had, during my Charles's illness, led me not to upbraid my husband so violently as I might have done, had I not seen that all was caused by my having *my own way.*

"The birth of a second child was to put my economy and contrivance to the test. I again strove to provide things comfortable; but it was no such easy matter: very little was brought me by my husband, and I found that, besides his drunkenness, he was in the habit of gambling. I had, as long as I could, from pride, kept all from my mother; I knew my parents had but very little, and I could not take from them. But now, worn out with fatigue and sorrow, I went to pour out my grief into my mother's bosom. I found her in her neat kitchen, all tidy though poor. She was reading, 'O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked *in my ways;* I should soon have subdued their enemies. He should have fed them with the finest of the wheat.' I sobbed out the tale of my woe, and I confessed to my mother that I felt my sorrows arose from my obstinacy in having *my own way.* I asked her if God would forgive me, and lead me in his own right way, if I sought him.

"'Alas, my child,' she said, with tears in her eyes, 'you have indeed forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed out to yourself broken cisterns that can hold no water. But yet return to God, he may, he will have mercy upon you. Has he not sent his only begotten Son into the world to save sinners? Has not Jesus Christ died the Just for the unjust, to reconcile sinners to God? Go to him, my dear child. He will seek after and restore the wandering sheep, and has but imbittered your own way that you may return unto him: 'I will hedge up her way with thorns, that she shall not find her paths.'

"I told my mother how ill I was; she soothed and advised me: I told her how I grieved to see my husband's conduct, and that I feared his inveterate habits would eventually wear him out, for I saw disease already taking hold upon him. I told her I was poor, and had not needful supplies for my situation: she promised to help me, and she kept her word. Above all I told her, I feared God would call me to judgment at my approaching hour of

trial. I felt I was a sinner and should perish, and perhaps leave behind me two dear little helpless children. She exhorted me to pray, and mentioned many gracious promises to encourage me. She read the 53d chapter of Isaiah, and especially the 5th and 6th verses:—'But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.' The words 'We have turned every one to *his own way*,' were like a dagger in my bosom; and yet the passage that follows these words was like healing balm to my wounded conscience, 'And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.'

"I returned home to my cottage, comforted by my good old mother's conversation. I put my child to sleep, and sat down to work, and when my husband returned, drunk as usual, I made the best of my desolate situation, and tried to recollect the scriptures my mother had read to me. As my trial approached, I begged that God would spare my life for the sake of my family, and determined that I would exert myself to support them in some way, that we might not wholly depend on their father for bread. But, after the birth of my infant I continued so ill, that I could not put my plan into execution, and I supposed God was going to call me to give an account of my actions—I dreaded the thought.

"Day after day, as I lay weak and languishing, did I meditate on the self-will and folly that had brought me to all this, and offer up many a petition that Jesus Christ would wash away all my sins in his blood. The little nourishment I took was provided from the scanty means of my poor parents. Ours was a wretched house; for there drunkenness and swearing abounded, and want was pressing hard upon us. Slowly I began to mend, and thankful was I to find myself once more seated in our little room below. But it was not what I had made it when we married. My gay carpet had been sold for bread, four of my chairs were gone, and the whole appearance was now bare and comfortless.

"I had now two children to provide for; my husband's health was sinking under excesses, and, oh, how heart-

breaking was the prospect before me! With the little money he brought me I endeavoured to manage, till my recovery was completed; and then I knew not what step to take for bettering our condition. I had no money; my baby prevented my going out to seek employment; and I began to sink into despair. At last I bethought me of my mother's remedy—Prayer. I determined to beg of God to help me to some relief, and to give me strength to bear up under all my trials. It was evening, I had nursed my infant to sleep, and as she lay quietly by me I kneeled down, but I uttered not a word; I could only sigh and weep forth the burden of my heart. The night was tempestuous, the wind, in gusts, shook our little abode, and the rain was pelting violently against the casement. I looked out to see if my husband was returning; but unable to discover any thing, I sat down supperless to wait his arrival. In the dead of night I thought I heard a deep groan near the doorway, and looking out discovered my husband sunk on the ground; I ran to a neighbour and obtained assistance to lift him in doors, but was shocked beyond measure to find, on seeing his face by the light, that the ghastly hue of death was spread over it. In his dying moments he had uttered the groan that had roused my attention.

"Now my mind was all distraction—for I had loved my husband even in the midst of his profligacy; and his death, with the distressing uncertainty as to his future state, nearly overcame my reason; moreover I was a widow and my children orphans. Oh, when I saw the coffin carried from my wretched door, when I found myself alone in abject poverty, then I saw the folly of *my own way!*

"My poor father's cottage received me again, not what I had left it, a blooming, gay, thoughtless girl, but a widow, a mother in distress. As I used to sit nursing my baby on the old garden seat, where the play days of my childhood were spent, many a bitter tear has fallen, many a heavy sigh escaped me. To this period, however, I look back with grateful feeling, as one in which I learned much that was good; and while I acknowledged the folly of having *my own way*, the Almighty turned the curse into a blessing and led me, in the midst of my distress, to seek refuge in Him. I was gradually enabled to see that in

Christ alone pardon and peace were to be found. and seeking eagerly from the lips of my mother that instruction I had so often despised, I was led to the foot of the cross, to seek the mercy of my gracious Redeemer. He pitied me and had mercy upon me; in him I found that rest I had never enjoyed before; and rolling my burden at his feet, I obtained peace and joy in believing.

"While I was toiling to assist in our support, my little Charles was growing a fine tall healthy boy, turbulent in disposition, and I found it difficult to manage his temper. My father and mother often told me that I was suffering my children to get the better of me, and that one day or other I should repent it; but I thought they were only like all children, and like what I once was. I loved them so dearly that I made a thousand excuses for them. If they troubled me, I gave them a slap, and talked loudly to them of what I would do; but I never took the trouble to administer proper correction, indeed my system partook more of idleness than of a wise concern for their welfare. Charles's headstrong temper often made his grandfather sigh, and give some wise counsel to me; but I loved *my own way* still. I thought time would do what I indolently neglected, and that as he grew older he would behave better. His conduct at divine worship disturbed the congregation; in the neighbourhood he was mischievous; and to me he was very often tiresome; yet there was nothing about the boy but what, under the Divine blessing, timely chastisement might have subdued, and brought into good order.

"My Susan, a lovely little girl, seemed to give fair promise of being my chief comfort. I denied her nothing, whether reasonable or unreasonable, and when she threw her little arms round my neck and kissed me, all the mother's feelings rose tumultuously in my breast; I longed to bring her up to a higher station, and make her more than her mother had ever been, but my means were few and contracted. I now laboured for them, and I hoped to rise and lift them with me into a higher station. I could read, write, and work well, and by the advice of my parents and friends I opened a school for the village children. Unfit as I was for the charge, I got forward; I had an increase in a few months of so many, that I could afford to place Charles daily with a respectable person, to learn to

read, write, and cast accounts, while my little Susan sat by me, and learned, or was idle, as it happened to suit her inclination.

" My father gradually sunk in the vale of years, and infirmity after infirmity crept upon him, till at last, without any positive complaint, he slept the sleep of death. His last hours, like his whole life, were consistent; he had no new religion to seek, but the firm foundation on which he had rested his hope supported him in a dying day. He found consolation in the Saviour; the hope which had cheered his life supported him in his dying hour.

" The day after the funeral, which my numerous though humble school enabled me to see decently conducted,—I shall never forget it—the clergyman stepped in as we were just sitting down to our tea. ' What an affecting sight!' said he; ' how, in the appearance of this cottage circle, is the pattern of life portrayed; here,' pointing to Susan, ' is the dawn of life, knowing no real ill, and sporting on the very verge of a scene of trial, soon to be entered upon, unthinkingly. There,' said he, pointing to me, ' is the traveller in the burden and heat of the day, often overpowered by the toil of the journey, anxious to provide for, and rear the offspring God has given. There,' pointing to the corner in which my dear aged mother sat, ' is one who has passed the sultry hours; a few steps farther, and her toils are ended. And there,' pointing to the empty arm-chair, the old stick, and the hat that hung upon the wall, ' there are the staff and sandals laid aside. May each follow close in the steps of this aged christian, and arrive as he did at the christian's end. My children, love and fear the God of your aged parents; my young friend, walk in the steps of your holy father, and beware of having *your own way.* To you, my venerable friend, what shall I say? Look forward and rejoice that there is a rest awaiting you; and to the happy spirit, were it possible, I would waft my congratulations on this happy change.'

" My mother now gave up her labours entirely, and attended only to my little household concerns. I shall here pass over several years of my short chequered pilgrimage. Charles was eighteen, Susan was seventeen, and not quite so affectionate to her mother as when, a laughing child, she used to clasp me to her with delight. I had allowed

her to *have her own way*, when it was only a trifling inconvenience to me; but this temper had grown with her growth and ripened with her years, and now she formed an attachment to a young fellow, which I saw, with anguish would lead her through the same scene her wretched mother had passed. But Charles was wringing my heart with more bitter anguish—still froward in childhood, he had become ungovernable in youth. A desirable situation, procured for him by our clergyman, was thrown away in a fit of mad folly to go to sea! Oh, when I went with him to the vessel, saw him step upon its deck, and when he bade me adieu with a tear struggling in his eye, as if half inclined to repent, how deeply did I feel it! It was of him I was so proud, for him I had offered my first prayer, for him I had laboured many a weary day, his whims I had indulged, his folly in childhood and wickedness in youth I had failed to correct; and now he could blaspheme, and was plunging headlong into ruin.

"I turned away from the scene, sick at heart with sorrow excited to the extreme. It was at the close of the day, in the latter end of autumn; I passed several windows, where the fires were blazing cheerfully, and the happy family parties collecting round the tea-table; but no cheerful fireside was waiting my return. My mother was sleeping silently by my father's side, in the churchyard; my boy was going to dare the dangers of the deep, with all his sins upon his head; and my girl, my lovely blooming girl, was going wilfully to unite herself to a deceitful man, who I saw would bring her to poverty and disgrace. 'And this,' said I, 'is *having my own way*. I was warned, but I would not see or correct the faults of my children; I brought them up with no consistency; I refused to check their foibles, till they grew into sins, and were past my ability to control. O that I had taken advice, that I had attended to the law of God, rather than to *my own way!* O that I had taught them to honour me in childhood! I should not now have to weep over their ingratitude, and to see their ruin.'

"I returned to my solitary abode—it was dark and dreary. My daughter was pleasure-taking with some idle acquaintance; I kindled a little fire to give something like cheerfulness to the dismal room—dismal, not for want of outward comforts, but from my own mental agony;

and I sat thinking upon my desolate situation; and bitter and cutting was my self-reproach, for I knew that having *my own way* had brought all this upon me. As I caught a glimpse of myself in an old glass that hung opposite, I could not help comparing it with the bright blooming gay girl that used to appear in its face, and the declining grief-worn widow I saw there. But my mind felt a keener agony when I recalled my neglected duties and self-will.

"Susan, in spite of me, married her wretched admirer, who in less than three months treated her cruelly; and for two years I used to sit, after I had sent away my little flock of children, brooding on her distress, and on the hardships and dangers my boy was contending with. No letter arrived from him, and I began to conclude that God had called him to his awful bar. Susan, pining away from poverty and ill-treatment, was led to her mother's sad acknowledgment, that she had been wrong in having *her own way*. But I saw her struggle against the tide of afflictions; I saw her, with subdued temper, seek mercy from the Lord Jesus Christ, and maintain before one, who met but to abuse and ill-treat her, a line of conduct becoming the principles that now guided her—she lingered long in a decline, and I laid her at last beside the two green hillocks in the churchyard. I had *my own way* with her in childhood, and it ruined her happiness; but while I repented of having *my own way*, I thanked God, who had overruled my misconduct, and had converted her by his grace, and then taken her to himself.

"But, ah! my poor boy—seven years passed, and I neither saw nor heard from him; I had given up all hope of ever meeting him again. I had just sent away my young charge one summer's evening, and was sitting down to my table, my bible open before me, my coarse loaf, and my tea prepared—a slight-made figure appeared at the door. Hectic was the flush on his cheek, and disease had set its mark upon him; but it was my boy—yes; I knew my Charles—years of foreign imprisonment, hunger, poverty, disease itself, could not obliterate that look by which I knew him. And while I wept at the tale of his woes, and charged myself with his sorrows, by allowing him *his own way*, I had to rejoice that he was taken from me, to be taught by a stranger's tongue, in a distant land, the error of his way, and *the way of eternal life.*

"Eight months he lay upon a sick-bed, sighing over his past follies, yet looking to the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy. He lies with my Susan, my father, and my mother, in yon churchyard. One little corner still remains for me; and as the last ebbing sand runs out, I would speak to all around of the wisdom and goodness of God, of the mercy, and compassion of Christ, and of THE FOLLY OF MY OWN WAY!"

QUIET, Lord, my froward heart,
Make me teachable and mild,
Upright, simple, free from art,
Make me as a weaned child;
From distrust and envy free,
Pleas'd with all that pleases thee.

What thou shalt to day provide,
Let me as a child receive;
What to-morrow may betide,
Calmly to thy wisdom leave:
'Tis enough that thou wilt care,
Why should I the burden bear?

As a little child relies
On a care beyond his own;
Knows he's neither strong nor wise,
Fears to stir a step alone;
Let me thus with thee abide,
As my Father, Guard, and Guide.

Thus preserv'd from Satan's wiles,
Safe from dangers, free from fears,
May I live upon thy smiles,
Till the promis'd hour appears,
When the sons of God shall prove
All their Father's boundless love.

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THE PILGRIMS.

AN ALLEGORY.

METHOUGHT I was once upon a time travelling through a certain land which was very full of people, but what was rather odd, not one of all this multitude was at home; they were all bound to a far distant country. Though it was permitted by the Lord of the land, that these pilgrims might associate together for their present mutual comfort and convenience; and each was not only allowed, but commanded to do the others all the services he could upon their journey, yet it was decreed, that every individual traveller must enter the far country singly. There was a great gulf at the end of the journey which every one must pass alone, and at his own risk, and the friendship of the whole united world could be of no use in that gulf. The exact time when each was to pass was not known to any; this the Lord always kept a close secret out of kindness, yet still they were as sure that the time must come, and that at no very great distance, as if they had been informed of the very moment. Now, as they knew they were always liable to be called away at an hour's notice, one would have thought they would have been chiefly employed in packing up, and preparing, and getting every thing in order. Not they indeed. It was almost the only thing they did not think about.

Now I only appeal to you, my readers, if any of you are setting out upon a little common journey, if it is only to London or York, is not all your leisure time employed in settling your business at home, and packing up every little necessary for your expedition? And does not the fear of neglecting any thing you ought to remember, or may have occasion for, haunt your mind, and sometimes even intrude upon you unseasonably? And when you are actually on your journey, especially if you have never been to that

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place before, or are likely to remain there, don't you begin to think a little about the pleasures and the employments of the place, and to wish to know a little what sort of a city London or York is? Don't you wonder what is doing there? and whether you are properly qualified for the business, or the company you expect to be engaged in? Do you never look at the map, or consult a Gazetteer? And don't you try to pick up from your fellow-passengers in the stage-coach any little information you can get? And though you may be obliged, out of civility, to converse with them on common subjects, yet do not your secret thoughts still run upon London or York, its business, or its pleasures? And, above all, if you are likely to set out early, are you not afraid of over-sleeping, and does not that fear keep you upon the watch, so that you are commonly up and ready before the porter comes to summon you? Reader, if this be your case, how surprised will you be to hear that the travellers to the far country have not half your prudence, though bound on a journey of infinitely more importance, to a land where nothing can be sent after them, and in which, when they are once settled, all errors are irretrievable.

I observed that these pilgrims, instead of being upon the watch, lest they should be ordered off unprepared; instead of laying up any provision, or even making memorandums of what they would be likely to want, spent most of their time in crowds, either in the way of traffic or diversion. At first, when I saw them so much engaged in conversing with each other, I thought it a good sign, and listened attentively to their talk, not doubting but the chief turn of it would be about the climate, or treasures, or society they should probably meet with in the far country. I supposed they might be also discussing about the best and safest road to it, and that each was availing himself of the knowledge of his neighbour, on a subject of equal importance to all. I listened to every party, but in scarcely any did I hear one word about the land to which they were bound, though it was their home, the place where their whole interest, expectation, and inheritance lay; to which also great part of their friends were gone before, and whither they were sure all the rest would follow. Instead of this, their whole talk was about the business, or the pleasures, or the fashions of the strange country which they were merely passing through, and in which they had not one foot of land which

they were sure of calling their own for the next quarter of an hour.

What little estate they had was personal and not real, and that was a mortgaged life-hold tenement of clay, not properly their own, but only lent to them on a short uncertain lease, of which threescore years and ten was considered as the longest period, and very few indeed lived in it to the end of the term; for this was always at the will of the Lord, part of whose prerogative it was, that he could take away the lease at pleasure, and turn out the poor shivering helpless tenant naked, to that far country for which they had made no provision. Sometimes, in order to quicken the pilgrim in his preparation, the Lord would break down the tenement by slow degrees, sometimes he would let it tumble by its own natural decay, for as it was only built to last a certain term, it would sometimes grow so uncomfortable by increasing dilapidations, even before the ordinary lease was out, that the lodging was hardly worth keeping, though the tenant could seldom be persuaded to think so, but fondly clung to it to the last. First, the thatch on the top of the tenement changed colour, then it fell off, and left the roof bare; then the windows became so darkened, that the owner could scarcely see through them; then one prop fell away, then another, then the uprights became bent, and the whole fabric trembled and tottered, with every other symptom of a falling house. On some occasions, the Lord ordered his messengers, of which he had a great variety, to batter, injure, deface, and almost demolish the frail building, even while it seemed new and strong; this was what the Landlord called giving warning; but many a tenant would not take warning, and was so fond of staying where he was even under all these inconveniences, that at last he was cast out by ejectment, however unprepared, though one would have thought the fear of being turned out would have whetted his diligence in preparing for a better and a more enduring inheritance. For though the people were only tenants at will in these crazy tenements, yet, through the goodness of the same Lord, they were assured that he never turned them out of these habitations before he had on his part provided for them a better, so that there was not such another landlord in the world; and though their present dwelling was but frail, being only slightly run up to serve the occasion, yet they might hold their future possession by a most certain

tenure, the word of the Lord himself, which was entered in a covenant, or title-deed, consisting of many sheets; and because a great many good things were given away in this deed, a book was made of which every soul might get a copy. This indeed had not always been the case, because, till a few ages back, there had been a sort of monopoly in the case, and "the wise and prudent," that is, the cunning and fraudful, had hid these things from the "babes and sucklings," that is, from the low and ignorant, and many frauds had been practised, and the poor had been cheated of their right; so that not being allowed to read and judge for themselves, they had been sadly imposed upon; but all these tricks had been put an end to more than two hundred years when I passed through the country, and the meanest man who could read might then have a copy, so that he might see himself what he had to trust to; and even those who could not read, might hear it read once or twice every week at least, without pay, by learned men, whose business it was. But it surprised me to see how few, comparatively, made use of these vast advantages. Of those who had a copy, many laid it carelessly by, expressed a general belief in the truth of the title-deed, a general satisfaction that they should come in for a share of the inheritance, a general good opinion of the Lord whose word it was, and a general disposition to take his promise upon trust; always, however, intending, at a convenient season, to inquire farther into the matter; but this convenient season seldom came, and this neglect of theirs was construed into the forfeiture of the inheritance.

At the end of this country lay the vast gulf mentioned before; it was shadowed over by a broad and thick cloud, which prevented the pilgrims from seeing in a distinct manner what was doing behind it, yet such beams of brightness now and then darted through the cloud, as enabled those who used a telescope provided for that purpose to see the substance of things hoped for; but it was not every one who could make use of this telescope; no eye indeed was naturally disposed to it; but an earnest desire of getting a glimpse of the invisible realities, gave such a strength and steadiness to the eye, as enabled it to discern many things which could not be seen by the natural sight. Above the cloud was this inscription, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Of these last many glorious descriptions had been given, but as those splendors were at a distance and as the pilgrims in general did not care to use the telescope, these distant glances made little impression. The glorious inheritance which lay beyond the cloud, was called, the things above; while a multitude of trifling objects, which appeared contemptibly small when looked at through the telescope, were called, the things below. Now as we know it is nearness which gives size and bulk to any object, it was not wonderful that these ill-judging pilgrims were more struck with these baubles and trifles, which by lying close at hand, were visible and tempting to the naked eye, and which made up the sum of the things below, than with the remote glories of the things above: but this was chiefly owing to their not making use of the telescope, through which, if you examined thoroughly the things below, they seemed to shrink almost down to nothing, while the things above appeared the more beautiful and vast, the more the telescope was used. But the surprising part of the story was this, not that the pilgrims were captivated at first sight with the things below, for that was natural enough, but that when they had tried them all over and over, and found themselves deceived and disappointed in almost every one of them, it did not at all lessen their fondness, and they grasped at them again with the same eagerness as before. There were some gay fruits which looked alluring, but on being opened, instead of a kernel they were found to contain rottenness, and those which seemed the fullest often proved on trial to be quite hollow and empty. Those which were most tempting to the eye were often found to be wormwood to the taste, or poison to the stomach, and many flowers that seemed most bright and gay had a worm gnawing at the root.

Among the chief attractions of the things below, were certain little lumps of yellow clay, on which almost every eye and every heart were fixed. When I saw the variety of uses to which this clay could be converted, and the respect which was shown to those who could scrape together the greatest number of pieces, I did not much wonder at the general desire to pick up some of them. But when I beheld the anxiety, the wakefulness, the competitions, the contrivances, the tricks, the frauds, the scuffling, the pushing, the turmoiling, the kicking, the shovin the cheating, the

circumvention, the envy, the malignity, which was excited by a desire to possess this article; when I saw the general scramble among those who had little to get much, and of those who had much to get more, then I could not help applying to these people a proverb in use among us, that gold may be bought too dear. Though I saw that there were various sorts of baubles which engaged the hearts of different travellers, such as an ell of red or blue ribbon, for which some were content to forfeit their future inheritance, the sin of Esau without his temptation of hunger; yet the yellow clay I found was the grand object for which most hands scrambled and most souls were risked. One thing was extraordinary, that the nearer these people were to being turned out of their tenement, the fonder they grew of these pieces of clay, so that I naturally concluded they meant to take the clay with them to the far country; but I soon learnt this clay was not current there; and the Lord had declared to these pilgrims, that as they had brought nothing into this world, they could carry nothing out.

I inquired of the different people who were raising the various heaps of clay, some of a larger, some of a smaller size, why they discovered such unremitting anxiety, and for whom. Some, whose piles were immense, told me they were heaping up for their children; this I thought very right, till on casting my eyes round, I observed many of the children of these very people had large heaps of their own. Others told me it was for their grandchildren; but on inquiry, I found these were not yet born, and in many cases there was little chance that they ever would. The truth, on a close examination, proved to be, that the true genuine heapers really heaped for themselves; that it was in fact neither for friend or child, but to gratify an inordinate appetite of their own. Nor was I much surprised after this to see these yellow hoards at length canker, and the rust of them become a witness against the hoarders, and eat their flesh as it were fire.

Many however, who had set out with a high heap of their father's raising, before they had got one third of their journey had scarcely a single piece left. As I was wondering what had caused these enormous piles to vanish in so short a time, I spied scattered up and down the country all sorts of odd inventions, for some or other of which the vain possessors of the great heaps of clay had trucked and bartered

them away in fewer hours than their ancestors had spent years in getting them together. O what a strange unaccountable medley it was! and, what was ridiculous enough, I observed that the greatest quantity of the clay was always exchanged for things that were of no use that I could discover, owing, I suppose, to my ignorance of the manners of that country.

In one place I saw large heaps exhausted in order to set two idle pampered horses a running; but the worst part of the joke was, the horses did not run to fetch or carry any thing, but merely to let the gazers see which could run fastest. Now this gift of swiftness exercised to no one useful purpose, was only one out of many instances I observed of talent used to no end. In another place I saw whole piles of the clay spent to maintain long ranges of buildings full of dogs, on provisions which would have nicely fattened some thousands of pilgrims who sadly wanted fattening, and whose ragged tenements were out at elbows, for want of a little help to repair them. Some of the piles were regularly pulled down once in seven years in order to corrupt certain needy pilgrims to belie their consciences. Others were spent in playing with white stiff bits of paper painted over with red and black spots, in which I thought there must be some conjuring, because the very touch of these painted pasteboards made the heaps fly from one to another, and back again to the same, in a way that natural causes could not account for. There was another proof that there must be some magic in this business, which was, that if a pasteboard with red spots fell into a hand which wanted a black one, the person changed colour, his eyes flashed fire, and he discovered other symptoms of madness, which showed there was some witchcraft in the case. These clean little pasteboards, as harmless as they looked, had the wonderful power of pulling down the highest piles in less time than all the other causes put together. I observed that many small piles were given in exchange for an enchanted liquor, which when the purchaser had drank to a little excess, he lost all power of managing the rest of his heap without losing the love of it.

Now I found it was the opinion of sober pilgrims, that either hoarding the clay, or trucking it for any such purposes as the above, was thought exactly the same offence in the eyes of the Lord, and it was expected that when they should

come before his solemn tribunal in the far country, the penalty annexed to hoarding and squandering would be nearly the same. While I examined the countenances of the owners of the heaps, I observed that those who I well knew never intended to make any use at all of their heap, were far more terrified at the thought of losing it, or of being torn from it, than those were who were employing it in the most useful manner. Those who best knew what to do with it, set their hearts least upon it, and were always most willing to leave it. But such riddles were common in this country.

Now I wondered why these pilgrims, who were naturally made erect, with an eye formed to look up to the things above, yet had their eyes almost constantly bent in the other direction; riveted to the earth, and fastened on things below, just like those animals that walk on all-fours. I was told they had not always been subject to this weakness of sight and proneness to earth: that they had originally been upright and beautiful, having been created after the image of the Lord, who was himself the perfection of beauty; that he had, at first, placed them in a far superior situation, which he had given them in perpetuity; but that their first ancestors fell from it through pride and carelessness; that upon this the freehold was taken away, they lost their original strength, brightness, and beauty, and were driven into this strange country; where however they had every opportunity given them of recovering their health, and the Lord's favour and likeness; for they were become so disfigured, and were grown so unlike him, that you would hardly believe they were his own children, though, in some, the resemblance was become again visible. The Lord, however, was so merciful, that instead of giving them up to the dreadful consequences of their own folly, as he might have done without any impeachment of his justice, he gave them immediate comfort, and promised them, that in due time his own Son should come down and restore them to the future inheritance which he should purchase for them. And now it was that in order to keep up their spirits, after they had lost their estate through the folly of their ancestors, that he began to give them a part of their former title deed. He continued to send them portions of it from time to time by different faithful servants, whom, however, these ungrateful people generally used ill and some of whom they

murdered. But for all this the Lord was so very forgiving, that he at length sent these mutineers a proclamation of full and free pardon by his Son, who though they used him in a more cruel manner than they had done any of his servants, yet after having finished the work his Father had given him to do, went back into the far country to prepare a place for all those who believe in him; and there he still lives; begging and pleading for those unkind people whom he still loves and forgives, and will restore to the purchased inheritance on the easy terms of their being heartily sorry for what they have done, thoroughly desirous of pardon, and convinced that he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all them that come unto him.

I saw, indeed, that many old offenders appeared to be sorry for what they had done; that is, they did not like to be punished for it. They were willing enough to be delivered from the penalty of their sin, but they did not heartily wish to be delivered from the power of it. Many declared, in the most public manner, once every week, that they were very sorry they had done amiss; that they had erred and strayed like lost sheep; but it was not enough to declare their sorrow ever so often, if they gave no other sign of their penitence. For there was so little truth in them, that the Lord required other proofs of their sincerity beside their own word, for they often lied with their lips and dissembled with their tongues. But those who professed to be penitents were neither allowed to raise heaps of clay, by circumventing their neighbours, or to keep great piles lying by them useless; nor must they barter them for any of those idle vanities which reduced the heaps on a sudden; for I found that among the grand articles of future reckoning, the use they had made of the heaps would be a principal one.

I was sorry to observe many of the fairer part of these pilgrims spent too much of their heaps in adorning and beautifying their tenements of clay, in painting, whitewashing, and enamelling them. All these tricks, however, did not preserve them from decay, and when they grew old, they even looked worse for all this cost and varnish. Some, however, acted a more sensible part, and spent no more upon their mouldering tenements than just to keep them whole and clean, and in good repair, which is what every tenant ought to do; and I observed that those who were moderate in the care of their own tenements were most

attentive to repair, and warm the ragged tenements of others. But none did this with much zeal or acceptance, but those who had acquired a habit of overlooking the things below, and who also by the constant use of the telescope, had go their natural weak and dim sight so strengthened, as to be able to discern pretty distinctly the nature of the things above. The habit of fixing their eyes on these glories made all the shining trifles, which compose the mass of things below, at last appear in their own diminutive littleness. For it was in this case particularly true, that things are only big or little by comparison; and there was no other way of making the things below appear as small as they really were, but by comparing them, by means of the telescope, with the things above. But I observed that the false judgment of the pilgrims ever kept pace with their wrong practices, for those who kept their eyes fastened on the things below, were reckoned wise in their generation, while the few who looked forward to the future glories, were accounted by the bustlers, or heapers, to be either fools or mad.

Well—most of these pilgrims went on in adorning their tenements, adding to their heaps, grasping the things below, as if they would never let them go, shutting their eyes instead of using their telescope, and neglecting their title deed, as if it was the parchment of another man's estate, and not their own; till one after another each felt his tenement tumbling about his ears. Oh! then what a busy, bustling, anxious, terrifying, distracting moment was that! What a deal of business was to be done, and what a strange time was this to do it in! Now to see the confusion and dismay, occasioned by having left every thing to the last minute. First, some one was sent for to make over the yellow heaps to another, which the heaper now found would be of no use to himself in passing the gulph; a transfer which ought to have been made while the tenement was sound. Then there was consultation between two or three masons at once, perhaps to try to patch up the walls, and strengthen the props, and stop the decays of the tumbling tenement; but not till the masons were forced to declare it was past repairing, (a truth they were rather too apt to keep back,) did the tenant seriously think it was time to pack up, prepare, and be gone. Then what sending for the wise men who professed to explain the title deed! and oh, what remorse that

they had neglected to examine it till their senses were too confused for so weighty a business! What reproaches, or what exhortations to others to look better after their own affairs! Even to the wisest of the inhabitants the falling of their tenements was a solemn thing; solemn but not surprising; they had long been packing up and preparing; they praised their Lord's goodness that they had been suffered to stay so long; many acknowledged the mercy of their frequent warnings, and confessed that those very dilapidations which had made the house uncomfortable had been a blessing, as it had set them on diligent preparation for their future inheritance; had made them more earnest in examining their title to it, and had set them on such a frequent application to the telescope, that the things above had seemed every day to approach nearer and nearer. These desired not to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon, for they knew that if their frail tabernacle was dissolved, they had an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them," Col. iii. 1—7. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Matt. vi. 24. "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt. xvi. 26. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them," Psa. lxii. 10. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for

that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Titus ii. 11—14. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John ii. 15. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God," Rom. xii. 2. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world," Gal. vi. 14. "Godliness with content ment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi. 6—10. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus," Phil. iv. 5—7.

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SOCIALISM SILENCED;

OR,

THE LOGIC OF THE LIFE.

A TRUE STORY.

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, M.A.

IT makes one sad to find how widely the canker of socialism has spread amongst some classes of our working men. In some large manufacturing towns, there are few factories or workshops into which it has not crept, and it does most mischief where there is most ignorance. Sometimes one pert, prating, forward fellow will dupe and mislead a whole set of men, because he talks boldly, uses big words, and seems to be very knowing and deep. What a pity it is that our plain men are not more of them able to handle the evidences of Christianity, and to beat such pretenders with their own weapons. There is, however, one way, and that, after all, the best way, in which the simplest and least learned believer may meet and put down the subtlest infidel—a way in which he may face the scorner as David the uncircumcised Philistine, with nothing save a sling and a stone, yet in "the name of the Lord of hosts," be "bold as a lion." The way I mean is, to contend, not so much by words as by deeds; not so much by the logic of the lip, as by *the logic of the life*.

I shall best make my meaning plain by a simple account, which, I can promise you, shall be quite true, because it will be about what lately happened in my own parish, and partly under my own eye. John —— is a dyer, who lives in a corner of my district. Some years ago, he was as bad a character as you can well conceive; a drunkard, a blasphemer, a cruel husband, a noted boxer, a practical infidel. As is usual in such cases, his house was the home of wretchedness, unfurnished and deserted; his wife was in rags, his cupboard empty, and debt and shame were his constant companions. About three years ago, however, he

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came under the notice of an assistant of mine. His wife was induced to open her house for a cottage lecture, and the husband, after a time, began to steal into the back part of the dwelling during the little services, and to lend a half-unwilling ear to what was going on. It pleased Him, "who leads the blind by a way that they know not," to reach his conscience in this manner. He became very uneasy, and, spite of his mean clothes, began to attend church. For a time his anguish of mind was greater than can be told. But at last that Saviour who came "to bind up the broken-hearted," and who died on the cross to save sinners, manifested himself to him as he doth not to the world, giving him "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," Isa. lxi. 1—3.

The calm morning after a stormy night is not a greater change than that which followed in the life and lot of happy John. All things became new. He set himself at once to wipe away the heavy scores which stood against him at the tavern and the shop, till at last he owed no man any thing but love. His house was made clean and tidy, and one piece of furniture after another was purchased, till the whole face of his cottage was changed. His wife and himself, decently dressed, were in their places at church whenever the sabbath-speaking bell bade them to the house of prayer, and ere long they were seen kneeling side by side at the table of the Lord.

A light thus put on a candlestick could not be hid. So striking a change in one who had been so notorious called forth much notice. He became a wonder unto many. Some admired, others mocked, and many persecuted him. His former infidel companions were more especially mad against him. They jeered him, reproached him, enticed him, swore at him, and did all in their power to draw or to drive him from his Saviour. But, deeply sensible of his own utter helplessness, he clung to the strength of God, and thus, out of weakness being made strong, his enemies only served to prove his faith, exercise his patience, and increase his watchfulness. The blast of temptation, which lays in the dust the plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted, only roots the deeper every "tree of righteousness" which he has planted in the garden of his grace.

John had most to bear at his daily labour in the dye-house. It was his hard lot to work amongst a band of

"Socialists," and they had it nearly all their own way. For a time, indeed, two men, members of a religious body, timidly took the Christian's part; but after a while, even these, worn out by annoyance, and ashamed of the cross, deserted both him and their profession of religion, becoming apostates, the vilest of the vile. The humble confessor was thus left alone, like a sheep in the midst of wolves; but he was not alone, "for the Lord stood by him." He was enabled to walk blamelessly and unrebukeably before them. Sometimes he reasoned with them, at other times he intreated them, but most commonly he did as his Master had done when beset by his accusers, "he answered not a word." His meekness was the more lovely, because he had been aforetime a terror to his companions, nor was there one of them who would have dared to provoke him. But now the gentleness of the lamb restrained the strength of the lion.

The quiet influence of John's consistent walk could not fail to be felt. His life was harder to answer than his tongue. A beautiful proof of this occurred one day, and shall form the point of my little narrative. His fellow-workmen had been for nearly an hour decrying Christianity as the source of all crime and wretchedness, whilst they boasted what their system would do if fairly tried—what peace and purity would reign in their "New Moral World." John held his peace for a long time, till at last "the fire kindled," and lifting up his voice, he turned upon them and said feelingly, but firmly, "Well, I am a plain-dealing man, and I like to judge of the tree by the fruits which it bears. Come then, let us look at what your principles do. I suppose they will do in a little way what they would do in a great. Now there," said he, pointing at the two apostates, "there are Tom and Jem, on whom you have tried your system. What, then, has it done for them? When they professed to be Christians, they were civil, sober, good-tempered; kind husbands and fond fathers. They were cheerful, hard-working, and ready to oblige. What are they now? What have you made them? Look at them. How changed they are! But not for the better. They seem downcast and surly; they cannot give one a civil word; their mouths are full of cursing and filthiness; they are drunk every week; their children are nearly naked; their wives broken-hearted, and their houses desolate. *There* is what your principles have done. This is the "New Moral World" they have made.

"Now I have tried Christianity, and what has it done for me? I need not tell you what I was before; you all too well know. There was not one of you that could drink so deeply, or swear so desperately, or fight so fiercely; I was always out of humour, discontented, and unhappy. My wife was starved and ill-used; I had no money nor could I get anything upon trust; I was hateful and hating. What am I now? What has religion made me? Thank God, I am not afraid to put it to you. He has helped me to walk carefully amongst you. Am I not a happier man than I was? Can you deny that I am a better servant to my master, and a kinder companion to you? Would I once have put up with what I daily bear from you? I could beat any one of you as easily as ever: why don't I do it? Do you ever hear a foul word come out of my mouth? Do you ever catch me in the public-house? Is there any one that has got a score against me? Go and ask my neighbours if I am not altered for the better. Go and ask my wife: she can tell you. Go and see my house; let that bear witness. God be praised for it: *here* is what Christianity has done for me; *there* is what Socialism has done for Tom and Jem."

He stopped. The appeal was not to be withstood. For that time, at least, the scoffers had not a word to answer. They were overpowered by the eloquence of example.

My brethren of the working class, follow this beautiful pattern—"With well-doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." "Be not afraid of their terror," 1 Pet. ii. 15; iii. 14. "Witness a good confession," 1 Tim. vi. 13. Stand fast, like Daniel before the den of lions, or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, before the burning fiery furnace. If you cannot argue, you can act. If you cannot reason down, you can live down the artful infidel. There is a logic of which, through grace, you may be masters; a logic so simple that a child can understand it, so conclusive that a philosopher cannot disprove it; it is the logic John made use of—*it is the logic of the life.*

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AMAZIAH;

OR,

THE PRESAGES OF RUIN.

READER! did thoughts of the future never agitate your bosom? never disturb your rest? Have you never been dazzled and confounded by vain attempts to pierce through the dark clouds that overhang the future? Has it never happened to you, that, setting aside meaner subjects, you have found yourself involved in impotent efforts to answer the awful inquiry, "What will be my eternal destiny?" Yes, such thoughts have presented themselves, and such attempts have been made, for you are of the earth, earthy; and to be absolutely indifferent to futurity, equally unsolicitous for its smiles, and unapprehensive of its frowns, would rank you higher, or sink you lower, in the scale of creation, than the position you occupy.

But are you disposed to carry out the inquiry? Will you follow it through all its bearings? May you, then, in perusing the following remarks on the character and destiny of Amaziah, the king of Judah, find a clew to your own, and learn what are the presages of approaching ruin; and what the reasons that should lead you, without delay, to seek the salvation of your soul.

Of Amaziah it was said, "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart," 2 Chron. xxv. 2. Alas! how many inferior motives may induce to the performance of right actions! Self-interest, reputation, love of approbation, the force of education, the influence of example, may all combine to form our conduct in religious observances, and in outward propriety of deportment; but God seeth not as man seeth; the heart is the great point in religion. Except the heart be right, there can be no genuine excellence—no permanent stability.

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Look to the heart, for " out of it are the issues of life,' Prov. iv. 23. As a man " thinketh in his heart, so is he,' Prov. xxiii. 7. The Divine demand is, " Give me thine heart;" Prov. xxiii. 26. If the heart be withheld, nothing in reality is given.

In the course of Amaziah's reign, an expedition was undertaken against the Edomites, who had formerly been tributary to the kingdom of Judah, but had revolted. In addition to his own army, Amaziah hired a hundred thousand men of Israel, to fight under his banners, for a hundred talents. Now, here was an instance of conduct resulting from want of thorough heart religion; it showed mistrust in God's power to give the victory to his own people, if it so pleased him; and a disregard to God's command, to ally himself to a nation that had departed from God, and joined itself to idols. Had king Amaziah possessed the religion of the heart, he would have said, like his pious ancestor, " Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God," Psa. xx. 7.

Previous to the engagement with the Edomites, a prophet was sent to Amaziah, to forbid his association with the idolatrous Israelites, on peril of total discomfiture. How striking the warning! " O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the Lord is not with Israel: but if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down," 2 Chron. xxv. 7, 8.

Now, all things that were written aforetime in the Scripture, were written for our learning; and dull indeed must he be who cannot, in this incident, discover a rule for his own guidance and direction in the commonest affairs of life. Its language is, Contract no alliances, use no means, avail yourself of no resources, have resort to no policy, but such as the word of God, and your conscience, directed by that word, approve; but if you will do it, then do it, and be strong in your own strength; but know that disappoint-

ment will ensue; for God hath power to help and to cast down, to make rich and to make poor, to give happiness or to destroy it. He can blast the most powerful means, and he can bless the feeblest, for "the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it," Prov. x. 22.

Amaziah's purpose was shaken by the prophet's message. He knew enough to convince him, that it was in vain for him to expect success, if he pursued a course that God had expressly forbidden. Yet there was another consideration, that such a man as Amaziah could by no means overlook. "But what shall we do for the hundred talents? This alliance has already been an expensive one to me; and if I break it off, I cannot recall the money; it seems a pity that I should enrich the coffers of Israel's king to no purpose. What shall I do for the hundred talents?" Oh, there is very little dependence to be placed on those whose chief concern is, "What is to be got by pursuing such and such a line of conduct?" or, "What shall I lose by relinquishing it?" And yet it is to be feared, that there are many who make the religion of Christ subservient to their temporal advancement and prosperity, and who either profess or repudiate it, as seems most suited to their own worldly interests. "Verily they have their reward;" but it would be worth their while to ponder the prophet's answer to the mercenary monarch, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this;" and to annex to it the remarkable language of our Saviour himself, "There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting," Luke xviii. 29, 30.

The king, though probably with reluctance, obeyed the injunction of the prophet, dismissed the army of Israel, and obtained a complete victory over his enemies. But instead of becoming more devoted and stedfast to that God who had thus signally appeared for him, he followed

up his success with one of the most astonishing acts of folly that can well be imagined, for "It came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them," 2 Chron. xxv. 14. A sad proof, that though he had obeyed the voice of the Lord, it was "not with a perfect heart."

The long-suffering of God was, however, still manifested towards him, and a prophet was again sent to remonstrate with him, thus, "Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?" What could Amaziah say, in reply to this just rebuke? What defence could he offer? He offered none; it was so reasonable, that he *could* offer none; but he was cut to the heart, and instead of humbling himself, and turning to the Lord from whom he had revolted, he resented the interference of the prophet, and angrily asked him, "Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldst thou be smitten?" ver. 16. The man of God knew that he was made of the king's counsel by a greater than the king himself; and seeing that the haughty monarch, like the Pharisees of after days, "rejected the counsel of God" against himself, Luke vii. 30, he did forbear, and only said, "I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel."

Oh! there is not a more certain indication of approaching ruin, than for the heart to be hardened against reproof. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall," Prov. xvi. 18. "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy," Prov. xxix. 1.

This was soon and awfully shown in the history of this infatuated king; he not long after acted with rashness and folly equal to his former impiety; he involved himself in a vain glorious and unnecessary contest with the

king of Israel, was vanquished and spoiled, his country was consequently plunged into misery, and himself slain in a conspiracy raised by his own discontented adherents; thus he who spurned the gracious warning of God was left to follow his own misguided course, until it plunged him into ruin.

The conduct and the end of Amaziah meet with too many striking counterparts among mankind now. Let us compare them.

1. All who live in the indulgence of sin are, like Amaziah, guilty of the greatest folly. They, too, have revolted from God; they worship idols; they bow down to gods that cannot save; they spend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not, Isa. lv. 2; they forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which can hold no water, Jer. ii. 13. They have enemies to encounter, and they seek aid in the conflict from the broken reeds of worldly confidence. Difficulties perplex them, which they strive to surmount by human sagacity. Afflictions oppress them, and they resort to worldly diversions or expedients for succour and consolation. They possess spirits of boundless capacities, which they attempt to chain down to the petty employments and amusements of the world. They anticipate an immortal existence, and yet seek satisfaction in the perishing things of time. In these vain pursuits they toil and labour; they pay dearly for them, and when urged to relinquish their futile expectations, they ask, "But what shall we do for the hundred talents?"

Reader! this folly has reigned in your heart and mine; does it reign there still? or have you renounced it? Have you found out that the promises of the world are false; that alliance with it is fatal; that all is vanity and vexation of spirit, and that nothing but dependence on God can avail amidst life's conflicts and trials? And have you been led to renounce the world's pleasures, and the world's

pursuits, and to seek for happiness and peace, for assistance and victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ?

2. The folly and criminality of sinners are greatly aggravated, when opportunities of knowledge have been afforded, and when deliverance and interpositions have been experienced; this was the case with Amaziah. God had wrought deliverance for him, he had given him victory over Edom, and thus proved that the gods of Edom could not deliver their worshippers; and yet the besotted king takes these very gods, and sets them up to be his own.

How much is this like the conduct of some, who, knowing the gospel, yet neglect it; of others, who "hold the truth in unrighteousness;" and of those who did run well, but have been hindered, Gal. v. 7; who once professed to be in earnest in seeking salvation, and resolved on giving themselves up to be saved in God's own appointed way, by faith in his beloved Son; but who have now turned back to the "beggarly elements" of the world, Gal. iv. 9, to sin and to folly, to self-dependence, or to indifference and carelessness about religion! Oh! the part you act who act thus, is as foolish as that of Amaziah, who fell to worshipping the gods of Edom. You too are turned to dumb idols that cannot satisfy—cannot save. Oh that you may, at least, be preserved from following him in his sealing sin, of spurning reproof, and madly rushing on in the way to endless ruin!

3. Notwithstanding the folly and perverseness of sinners, God is long-suffering, and employs means for reclaiming them. His anger was kindled, justly kindled, against Amaziah; but instead of sending a messenger of vengeance and destruction, he sent a prophet with a message of mercy. And such is God's method of procedure now. He does not, indeed, send an inspired prophet to every individual sinner, but "we have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed," 2 Pet. i. 19. He has permanently placed in the holy book, abundant warning, expostulation, and invitation—warning the most awful, expostu-

lation the most powerful, and invitation the most explicit; so that no sinner in whose hand the Bible is placed, can be at any loss to understand the danger of a course of sin; or the necessity there is for forsaking it; or the encouragement there is for him to turn to the Lord. Nor is this all; his faithful servants, the preachers of the gospel, are constantly employed, under his own authority, in proclaiming these warnings, expostulations, and invitations, in showing the guilt and danger of sin, and in pointing to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. This is their message; "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?—Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.—Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.—Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you.—Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!" Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Isa. lv. 2, 3, 6, 7; Isa. i. 18; Prov. i. 23; Psa. lxxxi. 13.

Still, as in the days of his flesh, the compassionate Redeemer yearns over sinners, perishing through their own obstinacy. And still the Lord proclaims his name: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," Exod.

xxxiv. 6, 7. And still it may be asked, "Who is a God like unto thee, tnat pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy," Micah vii. 18. And still is the way of salvation through the death of Jesus Christ, his Son, open to us; to the most sinful, "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Heb. vii. 25.

4. But then, when sinners turn a deaf ear to counsel, and resent reproof, and persist in sin, it is an awful and certain indication of approaching ruin. "I know," said the prophet to Amaziah, "that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel," 2 Chron. xxv. 16. Sinner, you might justly have been cut off at once, and left to perish without warning or invitation to repentance. But when, through the long-suffering goodness, and tender mercy of God, you have been thus expostulated with, and entreated to return, and yet you still go on to despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and refuse to be led to repentance, what can be the result of such hardness and impenitence of heart, but a heavy accumulation, and a speedy pouring out of the treasures of wrath, reserved against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgments of God? Rom. ii. 4, 5. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation," as that which the gospel reveals in the atonement of Jesus Christ? If the invitations of mercy be rejected, and the blood of the covenant be trampled on, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries," Heb. ii. 3; x. 26, 27.

It is a sad sign of approaching destruction, when the proud heart of man spurns at reproof, and hates the reprover. "I hate this Micaiah," said Ahab, "because he doth not prophecy good concerning for me, but evil." But Micaiah's warning, if it had been received, would have led to the

abandonment of an enterprise in which Ahab lost his life, 1 Kings xxii. 8—38.

"Get thee from me," said the hardened Pharaoh to his faithful monitor Moses, "take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face no more;" and the infatuated monarch persisted in his daring rebellion, and haughty defiance of Jehovah, till he perished miserably, with all his host, in the Red Sea, Exod. x. 28, 29; xv. 9—11. And so it was with Amaziah; he threatened the reprover, he hardened himself against reproof, he continued in sin, and his course terminated in ruin.

"Then the prophet forbare." What an ominous silence must have succeeded the prophet's last words! Surely the king will recall the faithful messenger, ere his retreating footsteps have ceased to echo through the royal saloon, and ask to hear again the word of the Lord; but no, his heart was hardened. Oh! there is no state on earth so awful as that of a sinner who is left to go on in his sins undisturbed.

When the blessed Spirit ceases to strive by ministers, by the word, by providence, and by conscience—when the faithful reprover in the gate, and that in the bosom, are silent, and the sinner is given up to his heart's lusts, then is the fearful mark of approaching ruin visible.

"I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel." Then is the fulfilment of that awful threatening near at hand, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early,

but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices," Prov. i. 24—31.

5. The history of Amaziah shows the folly and madness, as well as the wickedness, of resenting the faithful admonitions and affectionate reproofs of the ministers of Christ, and the people of God. It is not a delight in wounding the feelings that leads them thus to admonish and reprove sin, wherever it exhibits itself. It is not a sense of superiority that induces them to rebuke a world lying in the wicked one. It is not that they wish the comparison to be drawn in their favour, when they tell of the misery of transgression, and the happiness of a renewed mind. But it is that they may discharge their own duty to God, and relieve their own consciences, as well as to lead you to flee from the wrath to come, and find everlasting blessedness, through the death of the incarnate Son of God.

What if the man of God, from fear of giving offence, had forborne to deliver the message with which he was charged, and had prophesied smooth things to king Amaziah: he would have been accessory to his destruction, and would have incurred the fearful displeasure of God, for his disobedience and unfaithfulness; but delivering his message faithfully, though his counsel was contemned, and his message rejected, he stood approved and clear. Those are awful words, both to ministers and hearers, addressed by God himself: "Thou shalt hear the words at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul," Ezek. xxxiii. 7—9. Reader, this tract is intended to warn you

from your idols, and from your iniquity. Do you intend to retain them and die, or to forsake them and live?

What a mercy it is, that notwithstanding so many reproofs and warnings as we have slighted, so many invitations as we have refused, God's long-suffering goodness is not yet wearied out, but that he still waits to be gracious! But oh! trifle no longer; he has waited long, but we have no security for his waiting beyond the present moment. "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire," Matt. iii. 10.

6. Learn, finally, from the history of Amaziah, that character is the only visible evidence of state. By this we may know, and by this alone, who are the heirs of salvation, or of destruction. The mark of salvation is being brought to repentance, faith, and holiness, submission to God's will, and obedience to his commands: the mark of destruction is going forth with a hardened, impenitent heart, rejecting the counsel of God, and despising his gospel and his Son, and thus treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

Vain are the hopes of the presumptuous sinner that he shall be saved at last, and have peace, though he walk in the imagination of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes, Eccl. xi. 9. As groundless, also, are the perplexities of the humble penitent, who, loathing himself for his iniquities and his abominations, and sincerely desirous of forsaking them, and returning to the Lord with weeping and with supplication, yet fears that he shall not obtain mercy through Jesus Christ. To such a one it may be replied, If the Lord were pleased to kill you, he would not have showed you such things as these, Judg. xiii. 23. You have nothing to do with the secret decrees of God, but with the revealed declaration and invitations of his word. By them your course is clearly prescribed: "Return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously," Hos. xiv. 1 2. "God was in

Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 19—21. Follow these directions, and you will assuredly find that "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him," Heb. vii. 25. And "him that cometh, he will in nowise cast out," John vi. 37.

"Lord, didst thou die, but not for me?
Am I forbid to trust thy blood?
Hast thou not pardons rich and free,
And grace, an overflowing flood?

"Who then shall drive my trembling soul
From thee, to regions of despair?
Who has survey'd the sacred roll
And found my name not written there?

"Presumptuous thought, to fix the bound,
To limit mercy's sovereign reign;
What other happy souls have found
I'll seek—nor shall I seek in vain.

"Low at thy feet I'll cast me down,
To thee reveal my guilt and fear,
And if thou spurn me from thy throne,
I'll be the first that perish'd there."

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UNCERTAIN RICHES.

IT is universally known that recently there has been an uncommon agitation in the commercial world, occasioned by the embarrassment of many wealthy and confidential persons, whose unexpected failure has spread alarm and dismay throughout the country, and involved multitudes of tradesmen in difficulty and distress. Seldom, if ever, have riches been better entitled to the epithet "*uncertain;*" seldom has there been more occasion to exhort men "not to trust in uncertain riches, but to trust in the living God." (1 Tim. vi. 17.)

Every station in human life has its appropriate snares; for such is the depravity of human nature, that we can extract evil as well from prosperity as adversity. How wise and good, therefore, was the prayer of Agur, "Two things have I required of thee, deny me them not before I die: remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches: feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." (Prov. xxx. 7—9.) Part of this prayer is, perhaps, frequently adopted; for poverty is so frightful a thing, that every one is ready to pray against it,—but few, it is supposed, pray against riches; and yet they are equally, yea, far more dangerous: for where poverty has slain its thousands, riches have slain tens of thousands. In *many* cases we have seen men morally improved by poverty, and a few, alas! a very few, improved by their wealth; for, indeed, riches are, as an ancient writer called them, "DANGEROUS MERCIES:" and one of the dangers to which they expose us is, "*trusting in them.*" Hence, when our Lord declared that it was as difficult for a rich man to be saved, as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, he explained his meaning to the disciples, who expressed great astonishment, saying, "Who then can be saved?" (for *they* hoped to be rich) by adding, "How hard is it for *them that trust in riches* to enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark x. 24.)

And O, how generally are the rich disposed to trust in

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their wealth! In an early period of the world, in the days of Job, they did so. Hence, that holy man defends himself against the false imputations and injurious presumptions of his friends, by saying, "If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much." (Job xxxi. 24, 25.) An ancient version thus renders the words:—"If I have made gold my wife," or, "if I have married gold;" and therefore we rightly say of a covetous man "he is wedded to the world,"—he not only loves it, but is "in love with it"—"he sets his heart upon his wealth,"—"he boasts himself in the multitude of his riches,"—he accounts it his "strong city," where he will ever be safe from the assaults of danger, and the miseries of poverty; not aware that by thus "loving the world and the things of the world," he awfully proves that he is a stranger to the love of God, and that, in the account of heaven, he is no longer a Christian, as he flattered himself,—but *an idolater*. (1 John ii. 15.) Whatever we make our *hope* and confidence, we make our God, and so resemble the people of Israel, of whom Moses thus complains:—"O, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold." (Exod. xxxii. 31.) Many such gods have been worshipped throughout our country, but the rod of an angry Providence has smitten them; and, like Dagon of old, they have been cast down so that scarcely the stump is left. (1 Sam. v. 4.) Not so, holy and patient Job; he could appeal to God, that in his greatest prosperity, he did not make gold his hope, nor glory because his wealth was great.

Well then, might St. Paul direct his son Timothy to charge those Christians who were rich, (and a few such there were in Ephesus,) "not to trust in their riches;" and for this good reason, because they were *uncertain* possessions. Those who possess them cannot be sure of retaining them. This is strikingly expressed by Solomon, "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that *which is not*?" (Prov. xxiii. 5.) upon a mere nothing—for riches are only "glittering nothings, or like *bubbles* on the water, which glare for a moment and vanish." He compares them also to *birds*,—"they make themselves wings." Whilst the miser broods on his golden eggs, before he is

aware, they are hatched, they are fledged, and away they fly, with all the rapidity of the eagle. "In vain he tries with bills and bonds, and bars and bolts, to clip their wings; he will not be able to hinder their elopement; and when, by some desperate adventurous effort or speculation, he tries to recover them, he makes wings for the little portion that remained. The eagle is the swiftest of birds, and with similar swiftness riches fly away and receive their commission to whom they should go next. They are mine to-day—they were another man's yesterday—they will be your's to-morrow,—and whither they shall have flown in a few weeks, none can tell." The atmosphere of the metropolis, and, indeed, of the whole country, has been darkened all the past winter with the flight of these birds of passage. May God, in mercy, send us brighter days.

Thus rapidly fled the wealth of Job, "the greatest of all the men of the East," and left him the poorest creature in the country; yet still, "rich in faith," he resolves the mighty and sudden change into the sovereign will of God, and says, with a holy magnanimity of soul, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

But the vanity of riches appears, not only in the uncertainty of retaining them, but in the uncertainty of enjoying them, or deriving satisfaction from them whilst retained; for what Solomon asserted is frequently proved by experience: "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase," and this, he emphatically adds, "this also is vanity." (Eccl. v. 10.)

The uncertainty of riches is obvious from another consideration—if they do not leave us, we shall assuredly leave them. "We brought nothing into this world, an it is certain we can carry nothing out of it;" so that he is termed, in the Gospel, *a fool*, who, having amassed great substance, made sure of enjoying it many years, for suddenly was his soul required of him, and his riches passed into other hands. Let not the wealthy man, then trust in uncertain riches, "because as a flower of the grass shall he pass away."

But turn your eyes, Christian Reader, to another

and a better object, even to "the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy." Those who rely on their wealth, too often forget God; they are "full, and deny him," or rest in the gifts, forgetful of the Giver. Can we wonder, then, if God resume his gifts, and deprive men of the idol in which they trusted?

Turn away your eyes, then, from beholding vanity, and direct them to the ever-living God, reconciled in Christ to every believer, and make him your only trust and confidence. Reflect on his glorious perfections, and you will find abundant encouragement to repose on him.

God is love. He has given you his Son. What, then, can he withhold? "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

God is power. Our confidence in men is usually proportioned to their ability to help us; this led the father of the faithful to trust in God, "being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform."

God is truth. He cannot lie. Riches are uncertain; but he is faithful who hath promised, and there is an absolute certainty of receiving what he hath engaged to bestow.

These plain thoughts are suggested by the events of the day. They are painful, but instructive events; and those who are sufferers by the occurrences of the times, will do well to lay them to heart. Then will your worldly losses become spiritual gains. Seek, then, "the *true riches*;" "durable riches and righteousness." The justifying righteousness of Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, will make you rich for ever; and these may be attained. Ask and receive; seek and find; knock at the door, and it shall be opened to you.

And let those who, through the goodness of God, have escaped these pecuniary trials, regard the exhortation that follows. "Let them do good; be rich in good works; ready to distribute; willing to communicate; laying up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

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BETTER TRY!

WHEN that excellent man, Mr. Raikes, beheld the condition of the poor around him, perishing for lack of knowledge, and their children growing up in ignorance, idleness, and vice, three inseparable companions; the idea of opening Sunday Schools for the instruction of these children, flashed upon his mind; but the difficulties in the way appeared to be many and great, and he was almost led to give it up in hopeless despair. The little word "TRY," however, which stands at the head of this paper, was so impressed upon his attention, that he could not refrain from yielding to it. He soon set about the work, and collected a large number of poor children together, who were taught on every returning Sabbath the words of Eternal Life. Thus commenced Sunday Schools.

Many great and valuable works have arisen from very small beginnings; so it has been with all those great societies, which are now the glory of our land; and many arduous services have been performed by individuals, notwithstanding the obstacles that appeared in the way, from the disposition to make trial of what could be done. They did not say, "It is in vain to attempt this or that;" but they said, "I will try," and so they found themselves enabled to accomplish what they little thought of.

There are many objects, which have at different times commended themselves to the pursuit of mankind, and they thought for awhile that they deserved their attention and regard, but they were neglected; other matters pressed upon their attention, and were allowed to have the pre-eminence; and thus the most interesting and important objects have often been unaccomplished for want of regarding the motto, "Better try." Some treated the objects referred to with indifference, and others with contempt, while many who saw their claims to their attention, sat down in indolence and despair, and said, "It is in vain to try."

This is true in reference to both temporal and spiritual things, but it is more especially as to the latter that we would say, "Better try." Is the inquiry proposed, "What

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had we better try? what do you recommend us to try?" We answer in one word, "Religion." Mankind in general try to find happiness in the pursuit of worldly objects but one who had the best opportunity of judging, pronounces all that the world can give, to be "Vanity and vexation of spirit."

To those therefore who have been disappointed in their pursuit of happiness in worldly objects, we would say, "Better try Religion." The world must ever disappoint those who are so foolish as to look to it for peace and comfort; these are blessings that it has not to bestow.

'Tis religion that can give,
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die.

The *Neglecters of Religion, and the Profaners of the Sabbath-day,* had "Better try" the ordinances of divine appointment, and be found "remembering the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." Many who were altogether disappointed in their pursuit of happiness in the world, have found it in the sanctuary, and therefore, like the Psalmist are led to say, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." Ps. xxvi. 8. Attention to the tidings of the Gospel will produce holy peace and joy.

The Aged, who are worn out in the service of sin and satan, who have devoted the best portion of their life to the pursuit of lying vanities, and have met with nothing but vexation and disappointment, had "Better try" another master, and another kind of service.

There is one we can recommend as kind and liberal, tender and merciful; even Him who has the first and strongest claims to our service; the God in whom we "live and move and have our being," on whom we are all dependent, and to whose merciful forbearance it is to be ascribed, that we are still in the land of the living. The Aged had "Better try" the Father of mercies, and God of all grace; they are advancing rapidly to the close of life, they know not what a "day may bring forth;" what a blessing would it be, to be enabled to say, as some have said, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Many aged persons have long tried what the world can do, and what human systems can do; and they find these insufficient to support and cheer their minds in the prospect of death and eternity. Let these "try" the religion of

Jesus Christ, the religion of the prophets, apostles and martyrs; let them "try" that Saviour who is "mighty to save," who is "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," and it shall not be in vain. Others have found the most delightful satisfaction, the surest consolation, the most blessed privileges, and prospects in so doing, that is, in flying to Jesus as the "only refuge set before them in the Gospel," as the "only name given under heaven whereby they can be saved," as the "only foundation laid in Zion:"—and why should not you, my aged friend? This same Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6; and "him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." John vi. 37.

The Young had "Better try" those ways which are described in the Scriptures to be "ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace." Prov. iii. 17. So they have been found in the experience of thousands, and they are the same now as ever they have been. The young seldom calculate upon disappointment, they look forward to uninterrupted enjoyment, and reckon upon years to come. But how many find it otherwise; dark clouds have gathered around them, when they were contemplating nothing but uninterrupted sunshine. Breaches have occurred which they never expected, and they have often been called to sit down in sorrow, saying, "lover and friend hast thou put far from me." Let me recommend them to "try" the only resource in such a case, that is, the religion of the Saviour.

Yes, young friends, you had "Better try" the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." He can teach you to profit, and lead you in the way you should go. O "remember your Creator in the days of your youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them," Eccles. xii. 4: and "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all necessary things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi. 33. Have you lost a beloved relative, a friend, a parent? then your Creator says to you, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?" and Jesus says, "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." O! "try," you had "Better try" whether religion, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, cannot do that for you, which you have been seeking elsewhere in

vain.—The throne of grace is always accessible, and you are invited to "come with boldness" to that throne "that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need." Heb. iv. 16.

"Better try" Prayer, rejoicing in the privilege of access to the Father of mercies, through the mediation of Jesus Christ. "Better try" reading the Bible, for it is given to be "a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path," Ps. cxix. 105; and its blessed truths "are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way, but by taking heed thereto, according to thy word?" Ps. cxix. 9.

The *poor* had "Better try" whether going to christian sanctuaries, attending the ordinances of divine appointment, where the gospel is fully and faithfully proclaimed, and God himself has promised to be found; the reading of the Scriptures and religious tracts, will not be the means of affording them that relief and comfort, direction and guidance, which their trying circumstances require. God has "chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the heavenly kingdom." "I will leave," he says, "in the midst of thee, an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord;" Zeph. iii. 12; but they are assured that "bread shall be given them, and their water shall be sure;" and Jesus says, "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink;" Matt. vi. 25; and an apostle says, "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. iv. 6. How encouraging are these testimonies.

"Better try" whether they are not equally efficacious in your case, as they have been in the experience of thousands; "God is faithful who hath promised, who also will do it." Ah! you had "Better try" whether God will not do for you, what you have sought elsewhere in vain. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Is. lv. 6, 7. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

A

SUNDAY'S EXCURSION.

"IT is all a tale," said Will, with a sneer, one Saturday evening, to a female cousin, who spoke of the obligation of attending divine worship, "My brother and I are to treat my sister with a ride into the country." The lady was shocked at the declaration; and, with a countenance expressive of disapprobation, withdrew, adding, "It is a tale, sir!—but what if it should prove true?" This young gentleman, in consequence of the death of his father, was placed early in life at a distance from those whose more immediate duty it was to guide his youthful years, and thus left at liberty in the choice of his companions and pleasures, he had exchanged the principles which his mother had instilled into him, for others more flattering and fashionable. When he made the above open acknowledgment of his opinions, he had just come from a friend's house, where he had dined, and had perverted the excellent quality of the wines by drinking too freely. Elated by the entertainments of the table, Will was ambitious, in the absence of those whose years and experience would have been a restraint, to show his superiority to vulgar weaknesses and prejudices, as he was pleased to term them.

After breakfast, the two gentlemen and their sister Maria, stept into the chaise, which waited at the door. They had not proceeded far, before the young lady began to feel some uneasiness of mind, and expressed her doubts whether it was lawful to take such a journey of pleasure on that day. "I cannot help wishing that I had attended to the remonstrances of my mother who dissuaded me from it." "My mother is too narrow and bigotted, you know," replied Will, "and she will forget us all as soon as she sees her favourite

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preacher in the pulpit." "I dare swear," said his younger brother, "she has forgotten us already, for she is by this time at her prayers." "She never forgets any of us then," said his sister; "but I am now convinced that I have done wrong; for had I at all suspected that you could thus sport with our dear mother's feelings, and ridicule her devotion, you would not have prevailed upon me to be your companion." "Poh! sister, your notions are too antiquated. You have been too long in a confined sphere, among whining hypocrites. We must have you along with us. None of the people of sense and fashion think of minding religion, or Sunday, or going to church; they don't trouble their heads with such tales as these, but leave them to servants and mechanics." "Then they leave the best things to them, and take up the worst themselves." "You will judge otherwise when we have had you awhile with us." "I hope not: I am not at all ambitious of the honour you propose, for if such be the circle to which you would introduce me, I choose rather to remain at home in peace and obscurity. My friends are of a different way of thinking from yours; they may not be so gay and splendid, but they have as sound heads, and as honest hearts, and I feel myself perfectly happy in their society, without any wish to make a change." "An excellent preacher in petticoats, upon my word. Where, in the name of wonder, have you acquired all this fine rhetoric and divinity? Seriously, sister, I pity your weakness; and had I dreamed that your conscience was so very scrupulous, I would not have asked you to have been of our party." "And I, brother, most sincerely pity your thoughtlessness; and, had I known that your principles were so loose, and that you could talk in so profane and irreligious a style, your invitation would have been quite ineffectual. But I beg you will suppress, while I am present, such impious reflections, to which my ears have hitherto been unaccustomed." The young gentleman, silenced by this remonstrance, behaved during the remainder of the

journey with decency and good manners; but, notwithstanding all their efforts to force an air of gaiety and cheerfulness, the day passed very dull and heavily. The weather too was unfavourable, and confined the gentlemen to the inn, while their sister went in the afternoon to the village church. In their return to town, they had long intervals of silence interrupted only by yawnings. As soon as they alighted at their mother's house, the young lady repaired to her own apartment, and the young gentlemen to a tavern, to spend the evening with some choice companions; where the miscarriage of that day's excursion, and squeamishness of their sister, furnished no small share of entertainment

Before her brother's return, Maria related the whole affair to her mother, and expressed her concern and regret for having acted so contrary to her mother's inclination and her own sense of duty. As it was the first offence, she hoped to be forgiven, and promised she would never again suffer herself to give countenance to such an abuse of that sacred day. "Ask forgiveness, my dear," said her mother, "of God, whom you have chiefly offended, and take care to show the sincerity of your repentance by a stricter regard to the precepts and institutions of our holy religion." A few hours after, her brother Will entered the room; upon which she went out, and left him with her mother. Will soon suspected, from her countenance, what had been the subject of conversation; but she did not keep him long in suspense. With dignity, yet with tenderness, she thus addressed him:—"Sorry I am from my heart, dear Will, to receive such an account of your conduct as cannot but lessen you in the esteem of all whose regard is worth possessing. To have heard that you were seized with a violent fever, or had broken a limb by a fall from your horse, could not have raised in me so great an alarm as these tidings have done. A mind corrupted by evil principles, is worse than all the disorders and calamities to which the body is liable. With such an

inconsiderable share of knowledge and experience as you have acquired, how dare you despise that which has been credited by multitudes so much wiser and better than yourself; or deny the existence of things which it is impossible for all the sons of Adam to disprove? I am however so far disposed to think favourably of you, as to believe that you are not, as yet, a confirmed infidel; but have been betrayed into the profession of these sentiments by vanity, and a foolish desire of appearing as manly as your neighbours, from whom you seem to have chosen as models the most contemptible of men. But as you are only a novice, I am not without hopes that a timely and serious warning may not be altogether lost upon you. It has long been my study and desire to preserve on my mind a deep conviction of the uncertainty of all human enjoyment; and when I part with any of my family, to consider that I may never have the pleasure of conversing with them again in this world. Hearken to this then, as if it were the dying advice of an affectionate mother, who sincerely loves you, though your conduct is not such as she can honestly approve. Surely those associates who are so lavish in their assurances of friendship, when heated with wine, cannot feel such ardent and sincere wishes for your welfare, as the parent who brought you forth, and nourished you all your infant days. O my son! flee, I beseech you, the company of the vain and licentious: they may endeavour to persuade you that they are happy; but heed them not. They never taste of true and genuine satisfaction: and I dare appeal to your own experience, and ask, whether you have found that happiness in their company and ways, which you promised yourself. Believe me, my son, 'their house is the way to hell, leading to the chambers of death.'

"I shall not confine myself to a remonstrance on the impropriety of your conduct on this occasion, and the aggravation of its evil, by enticing your sister to participate of your sin; for all the laws of God are so intimately connected that we cannot infringe one

without manifesting a general disregard to the whole, and disaffection to the lawgiver. It is therefore a delusion of the father of lies, to persuade men that any part of God's commandments may be violated, without a considerable commission of moral evil, and without incurring a great degree of guilt. God who gave them, has not taught us any such distinction, and it is the highest presumption in us to pretend to make it. And it may here be observed, that the precept relative to the observance of the sabbath, is in the class of those which immediately respect God himself; and, on that account, it is less within our authority and ability to determine what portion of obedience it is entitled to. The day of judgment will discover how foolishly mortals reason on that topic.

"But you have been pleased presumptuously to pronounce these things, with that revelation which brings them to light, to be 'all a tale.' Ah, my son, how has the indulgence of guilty passions stifled the voice of truth in your breast! For, to suppose, that you and your companions had reasoned on the subject, is paying you too high a compliment. A time of reflection is, however, at hand with you all; a final sickness (if you are not suddenly cut down by death) will soon shut out noisy mirth, and conscience will constrain you to attend to its arguments, and hear its awful conclusion. Listen to me, then, my son, before it be too late, while I state to you, for your consideration, some of the weighty matters which compose the solemn system of truth, which you thus deride.

"There is a God—infinitely wise, holy, powerful, just, good, and true—the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and the future judge of all rational beings. His perfections are visible in the works of creation and providence; but it is in his word, the Bible, that he has particularly made known what he is in himself, and what his conduct will be with regard to his creatures, as they are either holy and obedient, or sinful and rebellious. Man is the creature of God and therefore owes him love, reverence, and duty and

being endued with reason, he is accountable to him for all his actions. Possessed likewise of an immortal spirit, he is connected with the unseen and spiritual world, into which he must enter at death. At his creation, we are assured, he was a glorious being resembling his Creator in knowledge and holiness, and perfectly happy in the enjoyment of his favour and friendship. But, alas! man is not now what he once was. By transgression he has lost his uprightness and his happiness. His understanding, once pure, is become dark and ignorant; his will, once conformable to the law of God, is now perverse and obstinate; and his affections, once supremely fixed on his Maker, are 'sensual, earthly, and devilish.' Consequently, as a corrupt creature, he is offensive to the eye of a holy God; as a guilty creature, he is exposed to the anger of a just God. Do not the history and circumstances of our race confirm these truths, and show that the divine displeasure hangs heavily over us? From the cradle we are beset with danger and with death; at every period of life surrounded with disease, affliction, and sorrow; uncertain of continuance here during the short term of an hour, and, without revelation, sunk in darkness, as to every thing beyond the present state of existence. Are not these things so? Dare infidelity deny it? Or can mere human wit and reason remedy it? In vain do men, forced to admit them, and borrowing a spark from the torch of truth, talk of repentance and reformation as a mean of restoration to the divine favour. Infinite justice will not pardon without perfect satisfaction: infinite holiness will not admit the society of a being which does not resemble itself. Human nature is also too depressed in ignorance, guilt, and misery, to raise itself, unassisted, to contrition and holiness. Mere reason, in this case, can only teach us to despair.

"Man, then, as a fallen creature, needs a revelation. That which you, my son, wickedly denominate, 'a tale,' is one mercifully granted to him by his offended Creator and is every way suited to his state

TROUBLE,

AND HOW TO BEAR IT.

Benjamin.

WHY, neighbour, you seem very gloomy to day,
Your face is the picture of care;
What loss or mischance has befallen you, pray,
To warrant that look of despair?
Are your children unwell, is your pig-sty blown down,
Or say, are you out of employ?
There's not such another sad face in the town—
Why what is the matter, my boy?

Joseph.

The matter indeed!—I am tired of my life,
Though free from the troubles you name:
My children are healthy, and so is my wife,
And work remains always the same:
But isn't it enough to make any one sad,
When, labour and toil as I choose,
My pay, after all, is so wretchedly bad,
We scarce can buy clothing and shoes?

I'm striving and toiling all day in the sun,
Exposed to the dust and the heat,
Yet cannot afford, when my labour is done,
To purchase a morsel of meat:
For money's so scarce, and the market so dear,
And so many there are to be fed,
That my greatest exertion, contrivance, and care,
Procure little better than bread.

Squire Russel, who lives at that house on the moor,
With his horses, his dogs, and his deer,
Wastes as much in a week, and a hundred times more,
Than would keep me and mine all the year:

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'Tis hard, Ben, to witness such evils as these
And gaily and happily smile,
And while others are living in plenty and ease
Be contented with trouble and toil.

Bill's uncle bequeath'd him, a fortnight ago,
A hundred pound note in his will,
And only last week, as you very well know,
Jack took to his grandfather's mill;
But I by myself unbefriended must strive,
No friends nor relations have I,
Who would give me the worth of a pound while they live,
Or leave me a pound when they die.

For age and for sickness some folks can provide,
And boast of their land and their store,
While my wants of to-day are but barely supplied,
And seldom I've anything more:
Then what will become of us all bye and-bye,
When my youth and my vigour are past?—
In trouble and want we shall breathe our last sigh,
And die in a workhouse at last.

'Tis easy, no doubt, to drive sorrow away,
When all things are smiling and fair,
But I wonder what man could be cheerful and gay
In the midst of disaster and care:
Light hearts with full purses may doubtless agree,
But mine is in desperate case,
And therefore you scarcely can wonder to see
My trouble so plain in my face.

Benjamin.

Well, Joseph, I've patiently heard to an end
Your tedious budget of woe,
And now you'll refuse not, I hope, to attend,
While some of your errors I show;
For while 'tis our duty for others to feel,
'Tis our duty sometimes to reprove,
And he is the kindest who wounds us to heal,
And mingles advice with his love.

'Tis plain there's a strife 'twixt your work and your will,
Your station in life you despise,
While the squire on the moor, and your friend at the mill,
Are looked at with envious eyes:

But remember this truth when to murmuring inclined,
And, oh, let it ne'er be forgot,
That if we can't raise up our lot to our mind,
We should bend down our mind to our lot.

Our Maker, who orders all things for the best,
Ordains your condition and mine;
In His wisdom and love we should constantly rest,
And never unthankful repine:
No lot is so low but contentment will find
A thousand delights in its road,
But unless we're possessed of content in the mind,
All else will in vain be bestowed.

Your health and your food, and your sleep and your home,
These blessings you daily enjoy:
Oh why will you cherish such sorrow and gloom,
And your life in such murmurs employ?
If you've less than you wish, you've as much as you need,
For our wants but a little will serve,
And if you have less than you sigh for, indeed,
You've more than you e'er can deserve.

The men that you envy have troubles to bear,
And perhaps quite as many as you;
The rich have their sorrow, their sickness, and care,
And are weary of nothing to do:
Squire Russell himself finds that wealth is but vain,
For only last evening he said,
"I should certainly be a far happier man
Did I work at the plough for my bread."

No doubt you've your troubles, and pray who has not?
Consider your neighbours hard by:
Tom's infant was burned t'other day in its cot,
And my own child is likely to die:
The foolish and wise, and the wealthy and poor
Have all some black cares to annoy;
On earth we should all of us learn to endure,
As well as desire to enjoy.

But I fear that your thoughts do not oftentimes rise
To heaven, or salvation, or God,
'Tis earth that engages your heart and your eyes,
And all else is but ill understood.

Your Bible is dusty, unopened, unread,
And your heart not examined, I fear.
Or you sure would not harbour such thoughts in your head,
Nor would life be such misery to bear.

St. Paul, as our minister told us last week,
Though hunted wherever he went,
In peril and hunger, in tumult and wreck,
With all things could still be content:
And remember what Christ for us sinners endured,
He was mocked, and betrayed, and denied,
Yet he never once uttered a murmuring word,
But calmly he suffered and died.

Oh dare you complain that you have not a friend,
Remembering His mercy and love,
Who to save us from ruin would thus condescend
To leave all His glory above?
And have you no Father whose blessings declare
He always is gracious and nigh,
Who has guarded and kept you for many a year,
And still sends your daily supply?

Rely on his wisdom, and pray for His grace,
With patience your troubles endure,
Remember that sin is the only disgrace,
But 'tis no disgrace to be poor;
Aspire to the riches that Jesus can give,
Faith, holiness, pardon and peace,
And this shall be ever your joy while you live,
Nor fail when earth's riches shall cease.

But come, let us enter the courts of the Lord,
And reverence His house and His day,
And seize on the blessings our sabbaths afford,
Before they shall vanish away:
Religion will teach us our troubles to bear
Without being very much vext,
Our path through this world will enlighten and cheer,
And render us fit for the next.

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and circumstances. It not only discovers to him his danger, but reveals the way which infinite wisdom and mercy have devised for his recovery and safety. Behold the person, character, obedience, and death of Jesus Christ the Son of God, appearing in man's nature, and offering himself a sacrifice to divine justice in his stead. Attend to what it declares concerning the work of the holy Spirit of God, in man, convincing him of sin, producing faith in the Saviour, sanctifying his heart, and raising him from a death in sin, to a life of holiness here, and of glory hereafter. How honourable is this plan to God! how safe and suitable to man! deserves it to be called 'a tale?'

"Observe the means by which these truths are conveyed to the mind, how well they are adapted to the end! the scriptures, which contain them, are in our hands, unfolding them in solemn simplicity, awakening our minds, from indifference and fatal security, by the most convincing representations of eternal things, leading us to never-failing sources of hope; supporting us under the sorrows and afflictions of life; disarming death itself of its terrors, and opening to our departing spirits a prospect of the gates of everlasting bliss!

"The Lord's day, (that sacred day which you, my son, lightly esteem,) how well fitted is it, in its retirement, its public and private engagements, to revive in our minds the impression of divine and spiritual things, so apt to be effaced by our intercourse with the world; and to carry forward our views to that state of eternal rest, of which it is a figure! the solemn ordinances of the gospel-dispensation, baptism and the Lord's supper, also, how forcibly do they inculcate those truths which are so interesting to all mankind,—the total depravity of our nature,—the necessity of being born again —and the death of Christ, as being the procuring cause of pardon, peace, and final happiness.

"If these truths affect you not, let your presumption be checked at least by the solemn and awful

representations of future realities, undiscoverable by reason and philosophy, which revelation gives; and the importance of which you will one day feel—JUDGMENT, ETERNITY, HEAVEN, HELL.

"Will you then, my son, any longer dare to call this revelation 'a tale?' Will you always be able thus to check the voice of truth? When death is drawing aside the veil—when eternity is dawning upon your soul—and the world and its deceitful vanities are eluding your grasp—will you then be able with a sneer to say, 'It is all a tale?' Awake, my son, awake from so fatal a dream! It is yet time. God is still waiting to receive returning prodigals. Jesus Christ is willing to communicate to you the blessings of his salvation. The Spirit saith, 'Come.' The church of God will welcome you to their fellowship and friendship; and I, your affectionate mother, whose bowels now yearn over you, will exult in your return with a joy inexpressible, and bless God, in time and eternity, for the richness of his grace manifested unto you."

Here the good old lady ended, for tears stopped her utterance. The admonition was attended with the divine blessing. The young man trembled; conviction reached his heart; he returned to God, and found forgiveness and peace through that blood that taketh away sin.

Dear reader, perceivest thou not that it is equally applicable to thee? Believe that love to thy soul dictates it; and may the same divine blessing accompany it!

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No. 503.

THE

"FREE AND EASY CLUB,"

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF ITS MEMBERS.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

READER, have you been saved by the grace of God? If so, you will rejoice that this narrative refers to several remarkable cases, in which similar mercy has been manifested. If you are not, but are still living in sin, this account will warn you of your danger. Do not cast this tract aside; read it; reflect upon its statements. You will be made acquainted with some striking instances of mercy, and some solemn manifestations of God's righteous judgments. These narratives are true: they are authenticated by a minister, who himself knew nearly all the parties.

In a small town in England there were in the habit of meeting together, through successive evenings for several years, about twenty persons, who constituted a society which they called the "Free and Easy." These persons endeavoured to obtain as much pleasure as could be derived from worldly conversation, drinking, card-playing, and frequent gaming. Their nightly meetings were, however, often productive of awful swearing, mockery of religion, intoxication, and other grossly sinful indulgences. It would be difficult to find terms too strong by which to describe various of their depraved habits. In the midst of their indulgences, they boasted that they were free, because they were not under the restraints of religion; and at times they fancied themselves happy while partaking of these sensual gratifications.

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The writer of these pages is acquainted with nine of these persons, and has been informed of another, whom he does not know, all of whom now affectingly describe the delusion and danger under which they lived while they belonged to the Free and Easy Club, and with grateful joy speak of the true freedom and happiness which they now realize in the paths of godliness. This narrative will relate, in the first place, the nature of the change which has taken place in the mind and conduct of these individuals, as well as the striking means by which it has been accomplished; and present an account of a few others of their club-mates, who, despising the warnings of their former companions, and persisting in sin, have died most awfully.

In an interview recently had with several who were once members of this club, but who are now become different characters, the writer of these pages heard them describe the manner in which they were rescued from the kingdom of darkness, and admitted into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

One said: "I was in the full tide of worldly pleasure, and anticipating a continuance of sensual enjoyments, when a conviction possessed my mind that I was wrong; that the course I was pursuing was a dangerous one; that the pleasures I sought were the pleasures of sin, and only for a season; and that if I continued in the same career I should be for ever lost. I was induced to reflect seriously on my ways, to read the Scriptures, and to attend the house of God. Often when I was listening to the preaching of the gospel, the light in which my sins appeared to me was so piercing and humbling that my soul was convulsed with grief. For some time I endeavoured, from a feeling of shame, to conceal my sorrow from others. At last, however, being convinced that I was in danger, and that no time was to be lost, I resolved to relinquish for ever my former course, and to seek earnestly the salvation of my soul. I confessed my guilt to the Lord; I

prayed for forgiveness through Jesus Christ; I repented; I besought the Lord for a new heart, and for a sense of his forgiving mercy. I have found that mercy; I have gained salvation. What shall I now render to the Lord for his surpassing grace? He has opened the eyes of my mind; he has shed upon me light from heaven; he has plucked me as a brand from the fire. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Another said: "I had been sitting in the tavern, one sabbath day, till I became half intoxicated. In that muddled state of mind I arose for the purpose of returning home. On my way I came near to the house of God. Curiosity excited me to go in. I had not been long there before the preacher read his text. The passage of Scripture selected was from Prov. xiii. 15: 'The way of transgressors is hard.' The sentence struck my conscience, and the sermon deepened the impression. I was completely brought to my senses, and retired at the end of the service deeply ashamed. The folly of my course appeared to my mind most forcibly; the delusion of seeking for happiness in sin struck me with solemn power. My experience answered to the statement in the text. I now felt myself to be a wretched being. My sins appeared in a light which seemed to wither my soul. Eternal misery seemed just before me. In the depth of my convictions, I reflected on the possibility of obtaining mercy. I soon learned the value of the cross, and gladly rested my soul on the atonement of the Lord Jesus. I abandoned my sinful companions, and forsook the paths of transgression. I yielded myself deliberately to the Lord. I have now for some time been engaged in his service. I have, through him, a glorious hope. I can say, with the martyr, 'None but Christ.' Oh, what enjoyment have I had since I trusted in the Saviour! In the world I never could find rest, but now I know the sweetness of divine repose. Those whom the Son of God makes free are free indeed. I hope now I can say, My conversation is in heaven."

Another, who, from his boldness and energy, had been one of the leaders in this circle of criminal pleasure, stated, that at the time when the cholera was prevailing in the town, he was the only one of the party who still continued, night after night, to visit the tavern. The sudden deaths effected by the fearful pestilence, and the burials of the dead amidst the gloom of night, so excited the fears of his companions, that they dared not for a few evenings assemble. "I determined," said he, "not to be affrighted. For some time I continued firm, and sat alone over my cups, glowing with indignation against the practice of interring the dead by night. At last I was also obliged to yield; fear came over me, and I also kept away. I then determined to reform, and to attend the house of God. For some time I did so, and commenced a form of worship in my family. I soon thought myself as religious as the best, and fancied myself all right for heaven. My self-righteousness was, however, soon cast to the ground. A circumstance occurred in the course of a few weeks which led me once more into the scene of dissipation. It was only for one night. Yet having again entered the scene of temptation, I was conquered, and soon became ready to go to the full length of folly. Midnight came, and I returned home. I hastened to my room, but dared not get into bed. Deep thoughts troubled my spirit, and I was thrown into a paroxysm of fear. In agony I walked the room. A sense of guilt oppressed me. I wished to acknowledge it to God, but felt as though some awful power resisted my words, and kept me from prayer. At last I was able to cry with earnestness, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' When thus humbled, the Lord heard my prayer. Oh, what a change succeeded! My burden was removed; new light shone into my understanding; peace came into my soul; I was enabled to repent of sin, and to trust for pardon and salvation in Christ. That was the first time I really prayed. Never since that time have I been able

to live without prayer. I have become indeed a 'new creature.' I would not for all worlds return to my sinful habits. I pray to be kept through mighty power. 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day,' 2 Tim. i. 12. In the service of the Saviour I find real liberty. It is heaven begun below. I rejoice in the idea of serving him perfectly above; I ascribe all 'to the praise of the glory of his grace,' wherein he hath made me 'accepted in the Beloved,'" Ephes. i. 6.

A fourth stated: "I had been, as usual, till a late hour of night, in company with several of my companions. On parting, we proposed a renewal of the dissipation on the succeeding evening. On my way home, through the deep stillness of the night, fears came over me, and a sense of guilt began to agitate my spirit. I soon reached home, and retired to rest. After some considerable time I fell asleep. I had not slept long before I dreamed that I saw hell opened, and imagined that I was about to be plunged into everlasting flames. Some power suddenly interposed to rescue me, when I heard a loud voice exclaim, 'Prepare to meet thy God,' Amos iv. 12. I awoke full of alarm; my guilt and danger appeared terrible to my soul. I resolved never more to revisit the tavern, but to attend to the warning voice in my dream. I was enabled to avoid the scene of my former folly, and, though often urged, never afterwards joined again my former companions in nightly revel. I began regularly to attend the means of grace. Sermon after sermon deepened religious impressions on my heart. I entered, as it were, a new world. The views of Divine truth appeared striking and beautiful. The love of God in the gift of his Son, and the willingness of Christ to save a rebel like me, at seasons almost overpowered me. My heart became renewed. Christ is my all. In him I find true peace. I would not exchange my present freedom and enjoyment for ages of sinful pleasures. 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus

Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world," Gal. vi. 14.

The one whose happy change has just been described, stated, that before his own conversion, another of this party, one of the most abandoned of the whole fraternity, met him one sabbath day, and requested him to go with him to the public house. He said, that he declined to go that afternoon, on account of the heat of the weather, and that he should for once go to a neighbouring chapel. His friend jeered him for his inclination, and left him. But passing himself close by a chapel in another part of the town, he thought he would peep in, and see what was taking place. As he got within the sound of the preacher's voice, he heard him exhorting sinners to flee from the wrath to come. The subject, and the earnestness of the preacher, so arrested the mind of this lover of sinful pleasure, that he became startled at himself, and exclaimed within his heart: "What a fool have I been! I have neglected and hated the gospel, and yet what solemn truth there is in it. 'The wrath to come!' If ever it was necessary for any person to flee from that wrath, surely I am the man. I am a child of wrath, a captive of the devil, and deserve to be for ever doomed to the world of wrath." He abandoned the nightly club, gave himself to the reading of the Scriptures, attended the "house of prayer," and commenced the practice of secret supplication before God. He has become a zealous Christian, gentle in his demeanour, consistent in his life, and heavenly in his affections. "What hath God wrought!' "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

A short time since, another of these club-mates came to the writer of these pages, and, after he had taken his seat, burst into tears. On recovering from his emotion, he said, "I have come, sir, to ask a favour of you: it is, that you would remember, in your prayers, my afflicted child. I am afraid he will die; but, if it should please the Lord to spare him, I hope I should feel deeply grateful." On an expression of approbation being made to him on account

of his estimating the value of prayer, he added, "I know its value for myself, and I wish to secure united prayer for my son. During the last two years I have felt the importance of communion with God. The world to me has lost its charms. Sin appears 'exceeding sinful.' There is no safety for the soul but in Christ; no true enjoyment but in his service. The things which are above deserve my highest affection. I wish to live in the pursuit of a 'better country.'" Is not this, too, a sinner saved by sovereign mercy?

Besides these, four others, who belonged to the same club, have been turned from the error of their ways. Of these it may be sufficient to observe, that they, as well as their converted companions, of whom you have been reading, are now as ardent in the service of the Redeemer as they once were in the ways of sin. Before describing the affecting end of a few of their ungodly associates, it may be observed, that in the interview recently held with several of these club-mates who have been turned "from darkness to light," the following particulars seemed very manifest.

First. They all evinced a very deep sense of their former danger, and of the greatness of their present deliverance. "We were," they said, "under delusion. We used to think ourselves free, and rejoiced in our independence of the restraints of religion. But now we see that we were miserable captives of the wicked one, and on the borders of everlasting ruin. How distinguishing the mercy which has saved us! Oh, what a deliverance! Eternity will not be too long to utter the praise it deserves." Now, reader, let us inquire, are you delivered? or are you under delusion, and in danger of eternal ruin? Are you, or are you not, trusting and following Christ? If not, escape to him. Cast off the bonds of sin, with which the destroyer is holding you. Judgment may soon overtake you. If you "die in your sins," tribulation and anguish will be your eternal lot.

Secondly. They also manifested a deep concern to redeem the time, and to pursue with vigour the great end of life. "We have wasted," they said, "much of precious time. We abused it to the worst of purposes. If God had been strict to mark iniquity, and severe to punish, where should we have been? Now we perceive the value and the purpose of life. While we live, we wish to live to God; to forget the things which are behind, and to press to those which are before, that we may obtain "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," Phil. iii. 13, 14.

What use do you, reader, make of time? Have you thought of its value, and the solemn responsibility it involves? You must give an account of all your hours. If they be not spent in the service of God, and in preparation for eternity, they will be wasted; they will witness against you at the great day.

Thirdly. The concern these persons exhibited for the salvation of the souls of their fellow sinners appeared a prominent feature in their character. Knowing now the worth of their own souls, they feel for the souls of others. They are now nearly all engaged on the sabbath day in active efforts to bring sinners to the knowledge of the truth. As many as 300 persons from week to week receive, in different ways, instruction from them on the subjects of religion; and upwards of forty persons have, by a blessing on their efforts, been induced to renounce the world, and follow Christ.

Reader; what is your opinion of this course? What is the character of your life? Are you a blessing, or a curse? Do you set an example of piety, or profaneness? Observe how useful you may become by devotedness to the service of Christ. Oh, may you be led in earnestness to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 6.

Fourthly. These persons all described themselves as incomparably more happy, than they were while pursuing the pleasures of sin. "We had," they said, "in the days of our vanity, certain enjoyments. Our gratifications,

at times, were great. But they were sensual, depraved, and almost invariably followed by pain. We often dreaded the morning light after a night of dissipation. To tranquil, rational, enlightened peace, we were total strangers. Now we know from experience the nature and value of the peace 'which passeth all understanding.' We are not afraid to reflect on the most serious subjects. We are not afraid to meet our God. Death and eternity, the heavenly world and the final judgment, are, to our minds, attractive as well as glorious themes. We have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and can affirm that the pleasures of godliness are great and enduring realities. With respect to a future existence, shall we not say, with gratitude and exultation, We have a hope which 'maketh not ashamed?'"

Reader, what are your chosen pleasures? Are they those of reason, reflection, conscience, religion? or are they worldly, sensual enjoyments? The former will remain; the latter will die. The pleasures of sin curse and wither the soul; those of religion bless and ennoble the spirit. You know that without God you are not happy. You fear to meet him, and would shudder at the idea of being conducted to-morrow to his judgment-seat. Oh, why pursue a course which, if even it yield you now the semblance of pleasure, must soon plunge you into an eternity of misery.

Come now, reader, and take a brief view of some of the remaining club-mates. You have read the description of ten. These have come to their "right mind," and rejoice in the change of their views and feelings in regard to God and to his Son Jesus Christ. What has become of the remainder? The answer to this question would be a deeply affecting one. With respect to three of them who are living now, (A.D. 1842,) nothing shall be said. Seven have died; most of them were cut off suddenly and awfully. I will describe to you the latter end of four of them.

One had been indulging in the carousal of sinful pleasure until a late hour of night, and uttering sentiments of a very awful character. He arose to return home, but before he arrived at his house, he broke a blood-vessel in the lungs; and, about the hour of the meeting of the club on the next evening, his soul passed to meet its God. What a meeting! the terrors of his dying bed were soon followed by the deeper terrors created by the light of eternity.

Another, when reminded one day of the solemnity and importance of religion, replied, with scorn, "Tell me not of religion; I despise it. If there be a way to hell, I choose that way: I shall walk in that path whenever I can discover it; I want to find the place." He soon found it; for a few days afterwards he was suddenly seized with a fatal disorder, became instantly insensible, and in a very short time closed his eyes in death.

Another, at one of their meetings, accepted a challenge, for a wager, to drink an unusual quantity of intoxicating liquor. He obtained the prize, and boasted of his achievement. In the pride of his heart, he poured contempt on religion for its meanness, and on the followers of the truth for their hypocrisy. In an hour after this, a dreadful malady seized him. His sufferings, both of body and soul, now commenced, and continued about two days. The pain of his body was great, but the agony of his mind far greater. He became a most wretched victim of remorse and fear. His conscience awoke in dreadful power. The future world, which seemed near to him, filled him with terror. He dared not cast his eyes around the room, lest he should see the apparition of some awful being waiting to conduct him to perdition. He repeatedly affirmed that spirits of darkness were near him. Lest he should see their appearances, he constantly kept his hands before his eyes, or requested that they might be covered. Even then he exclaimed that he could see

them: such were the terrors his conscience produced. At last he expired, and truly terrific were his final moments.

Attend, reader, to but one more case. If possible, this was more appalling than the former. This person was a most daring blasphemer; he uttered, in unmeasured language, his scoffs against God and his people. He, too, was arrested by a powerful malady, which, though incurable, did not terminate his life till about a fortnight after the attack. The latent powers of his conscience now began to awake in terrific force. He became full of the imaginations of infernal things. His descriptions of the scenes which filled his mind were, to the last degree, thrilling and awful. He seemed to be lying in the immediate view of the place "prepared for the devil and his angels." He declared, that day and night he was incessantly haunted with evil spirits. He retained his hatred to the followers of Jesus to the last, and would not allow them to come near him. His soul was already in the strong possession of the powers of hell, and he repelled every word that could be uttered for his deliverance. So dreadful were his exclamations, so terrific his language, and so tremendous the scene of his suffering, that for several days his wife dared not enter his room. He at last died impenitent, gloomy, wretched in the extreme. Who shall describe his present condition?

Now, reader, you are intreated to reflect on these statements: they are true. Is there not, in this narrative, evidence of the reality and excellence of the religion of Jesus Christ, as well as of the folly and misery which attend its rejection? Does it not prove, in various instances, the pleasantness of piety, and the hardness of the way of the transgressor? Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? There is salvation in no other name. Which of the members of this club have the advantage now? The renewed, the saved? or the depraved, the lost? Which will have the advantage in the morning of

the resurrection, and before the judgment-seat? Will the course of life you are now pursuing prepare you for that dread tribunal? or will it expose you to "shame and everlasting contempt?" Dan. xii. 2. Judge now for yourself. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," Josh. xxiv. 15. Life is fleetly passing away. Eternity is near at hand. "Behold, the Judge standeth before the door," James v. 9. Do not trifle with your immortal soul. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. He is ready to receive you. Do not despise the riches of his grace. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isa. xxxiii. 14.

Shall men pretend to pleasure
Who never knew the Lord?
Can all the worldling's treasure
True peace of mind afford?
They shall obtain this jewel
In what their hearts desire,
When they by adding fuel,
Can quench the flame of fire.

Till you can bid the ocean,
When furious tempests roar,
Forget its wonted motion,
And rage and swell no more;
In vain your expectation
To find content in sin;
Or freedom from vexation,
While passions reign within.

Come, turn your thoughts to Jesus,
If you would good possess;
'Tis he alone that frees us
From guilt and from distress:
When he by faith is present,
The sinner's troubles cease;
His ways are truly pleasant,
And all his paths are peace.

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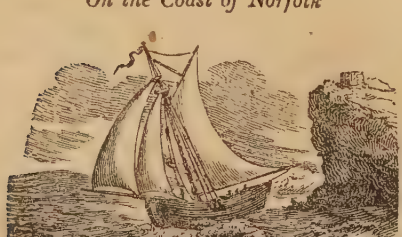
AN ACCOUNT OF THE

LOSS OF PART OF THE CREW

OF A

FISHING VESSEL,

On the Coast of Norfolk



ON Saturday, October 11th, 1823, a very high wind from the S. S. E. rose suddenly, and continued to blow for some hours. The strength of the wind occasioned a great swell in the sea, and obliged the fishing-boat, whose loss it is now our object to record, with others overtaken in the storm, to pass the night in reaching in and out from land. During the violence of the storm, this boat was so well kept to the wind, that it only shipped a little light water. It had on board ten men, and the two children of the master. Just about mid-day, they came in betwixt the Reach and the Hasborough Sand. All the men were then upon deck, and the two children below. About this time, the master being at the helm, one of the children, who was standing in the cabin cap, heard his father say, "Hold fast boys, here comes a dreadful sea." At this moment, a tremendous wave broke upon the boat's quarter and carried away the mainmast, binnacle, all the rigging in the hinder part of the vessel, and all the men, except two, who escaped by being jammed between the cross piece and the deck. The boy was knocked down into the cabin by the force of the water. He soon, however, came again upon deck, but he looked in vain for his father and the crew. Only two survived, the rest he saw no more. The attention of those that remained was soon roused by the danger of their situation. They soon discovered, immediately before them, the breakers upon the Hasborough Sand. With a small foresail that remained, they managed, however, to turn the boat about and avoid the

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breakers. They were then drifted for about two hours, when they met with a French fishing-boat, the crew of which treated them with great kindness, and the next day put the boys ashore at Yarmouth.

These are the details of a melancholy accident, which has deprived, at least, fourteen children of their parents and supporters, three women of their husbands, besides many families of their brothers and friends.

Awful as are the consequences of this calamity, in the affliction of the families and friends of those who have been thus taken away, it has afforded so striking a proof of some important lessons which are often pressed upon us, and too often heard in vain, that a few observations, connected with this part of the subject, may be useful.

The first lesson is that of the *awful uncertainty of life.* These persons who have been taken from us, were most of them young, full of strength, and appeared likely to see many years pass over their heads. But in one moment they were snatched out of the world. So sudden was their death, that they probably never felt the pain of dying; for death came upon them before they knew their danger. In one moment they were hurried from their ordinary course of life, without a single opportunity for repentance or for prayer, to appear before the throne of God. But which of us can say that this will not be our own case? We may little expect to be so called away; few men do expect it: but are we the more safe for this persuasion? Whatever is our occupation, the uncertainty of life is the same. Sailors are, indeed, peculiarly exposed to sudden death, but accidents of another kind may overtake persons in every employment of life. We are sometimes exposed to the most sudden and fatal danger in our houses, in travelling, or by disease, which, from pain, or delirium, often attending it, takes away the power of giving any heed to our spiritual state. Should not all this alarm us? Should it not place before us the question, How are we prepared to meet death? Should it not make us, before another moment (which may be the last) passes over our head, turn to the ways of religion, and seek for that salvation, which, if obtained, can alone prevent death from being to us a most grievous evil? Should we not seek so to live at all times, and under all circumstances, that death may be gain to us? But this brings me to the second point of consideration.

2nd. *The preparation which is necessary in order to meet death.* The death of the body is not the death of the soul, but rather its introduction to another and eternal state of existence. The soul goes to happiness or misery, to heaven or to hell; to hear the words, "Come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world;' or "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Is not this a change for which preparation is necessary? and what preparation have we made? We may, perhaps, have been living in open transgression of the laws of

God, walking in the counsel of the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners, or sitting in the seat of the scorners. We may have lived in habits of gross self-indulgence, of drunkenness, or sensuality; we may have neglected the worship of God, or profaned his sabbaths; we may have yielded to the sinful, careless practices, of an ungodly world. But has this been a preparation suitable for our judgment before a holy God? Has this mode of life fitted us for the eternal enjoyment of heaven? If we have not been willing to spend one day in seven, the sabbath, in the worship of God upon earth, how shall we bear his continual service in heaven? If we have not been willing to confess his name, and to follow his laws before men, how can we meet him, when He comes to require this at our hands, at the great day of account? Or, if we have not been living in open and gross sin, we may have lived in that state of indifference, or of lukewarmness about religion, which the Almighty equally abhors. Satisfied with our present attainments, we may not have made it our business to strive to enter in at the strait gate; to watch, to pray, to be doing the work of religion with all our heart, as wrestlers, or as runners, labour for their prize. It often happens that, with a slight profession of religion, and with an outward reformation from open sin, persons fancy that the great change which the word of God requires has been effected; that they have become new creatures, and that they need neither believe, nor feel, nor do any thing more, to attain everlasting life. But if their state is examined closely, it will be found, that the necessary result of real conversion of heart, is not found in them; they have no sorrow for sin, as it has offended God; they never have been led by a sense of their misery, to seek for mercy at the cross of Christ; they are not desiring and seeking spiritual knowledge; they are not aiming to live in all good conscience both towards God and man.

But there is a third observation suggested by this awful event. We are taught *the duty of endeavouring to lead our friends to God, while they are left with us.* On the case of the individuals now called away no opinion is offered. But surely multitudes connected with us are called, who are unprepared. But what have we done for their souls? When did we denounce to them the fatal consequences of sin; display to them the joys of religion; lead them to the foot of the cross; point out to them the gracious invitations of the Saviour; show them the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations; bid them come with us to the house of God, or unite in reading the Scriptures. Are there none gone before the tribunal of the Almighty, whom we may expect to arise at the great day, and to say of us in the presence of God, and of the holy angels, "That man saw me sin, and never alarmed me—saw me ignorant and never instructed me—saw me on the brink of perdition, and never stretched out a hand to save me?" How forcibly does this lesson speak *to ministers*, that they watch and labour and pray, as those who must give account; *to parents*,

that they may not, by their neglect, or their bad example, have to answer for their children's sin, and mourn over their condemnation; *to those who have been led to consider the importance of eternity*, and who have been taught the way of salvation, that they may be earnest in pointing out to others the danger of carelessness, and the hope set before sinners in the gospel; *to those who by their mockery, or their ill advice, most ignorantly, and unwisely, put a stumbling-block in the way of others*, who entice them from their duty to God, and lead them to profane the sabbath; or if they have begun to walk in the ways of God, attach some term of mockery to their religion, which may serve to bring themselves or their profession into contempt.

A fourth duty to be collected from this awful event, is, that as life is still spared to us, *we may make haste to avail ourselves of the gracious invitations of the Saviour:* "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me." This was the language which he used to the church of Laodicea, when he rebuked and chastened it. He stood, and by his judgments he knocked, that he might call that lukewarm and self-righteous people, to be zealous and to repent. By this full and free invitation, he displayed at once his patience, in continuing to call whilst they refused to listen, and his willingness to receive all that come to him, and take his yoke upon them. Jesus now stands at the door, and in like manner calls upon every poor sinner to turn to him, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He assures us that he willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his evil ways and live. Why will ye die, is the appeal which He now makes to the reader of this Tract. "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, (saith the Lord) wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." Turn then to the Lord with all your heart. Acknowledge your sins, and seek for salvation at the foot of the cross of Christ; for his blood cleanseth from all sin; implore the grace of his Spirit to preserve and sanctify your heart, to enable you to walk in the holy path of the servants of God, and to persevere to the end. The time may be very short to us, in which God will thus continue to invite. Let us then turn from our sins and seek salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. So shall we be found ready, however suddenly we may be called to the judgment of the Great Day.

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No. 307.

THE ROLL CALL;

OR,

HOW WILL YOU ANSWER IT?

"IT'S all up with me:" exclaimed Dick Holmes, starting from the arm-chair in which he had been dozing; for the chimes of the clock, sounding through the little apartment, told him that he had outstaid his time by half an hour, and was too late for roll call.

As he snatched his cap from the table, the half-stifled laughter of his village companions increased the soldier's vexation, and he began to curse and swear at them; adding, "If I'd but five minutes to throw away upon you, I'd make you remember it. But never fear, I'll pay you off yet"—and he shook his fist, with a furious look, as he darted from the door; while they shouted after him, "The roll call, Dick! the roll call! How will you answer it?"

"Vagabonds!" he muttered in reply, as, at full speed, he ran across the fields, taking the shortest possible cut towards the barracks.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799;
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How he should answer it, was, indeed, a question that Dick Holmes could not solve. The officer then in command of the regiment was a strict disciplinarian; and having succeeded one who had been rather too indulgent, he took great pains to enforce the most rigid attention on the part of those around him. Dick had been begged out of a scrape, with very great difficulty, not long before: and the serjeant who then stood his friend, had promised to keep a strict eye over him, and to report him immediately, should he again transgress.

After a very hard run, our friend Dick reached the barrack-gate, near which some soldiers were standing, who hailed him in no small surprise: for Dick seldom appeared in such haste, unless when going to the canteen. "Halloo! comrade. What hurry? What news?"

Dick paused. and stared about him, for it was evident that the muster had not yet taken place.

"Hang the clock!" he exclaimed, "'twas a false alarm, then, after all."

And then, amid the loud laughter of his merry comrades, he wiped the dust and moisture from his face, and explained the occasion of his violent speed.

"Oh, depend on it, they put the clock forward," said one. This was indeed the case; and Dick's roguish companions had played him the trick in consequence of his having expressed such dread of the colonel, whose strictness he described to them.

Dick was much joked by his comrades about the clock: but there was one old soldier who took it up in a different manner. He did, indeed, smile when he heard the story: but not when Dick swore to be revenged on the parties concerned.

This veteran, whose name was Gray, took an opportunity, the next morning, of getting into conversation with Dick Holmes, and asked him how he felt during his forced march.

"Why, really," said the other, "I can hardly tell: I was completely bothered by the question the rascals sent after me—'How will you answer it?' I couldn't get that out of my head."

"It's a pity that ever you should," observed Gray.

"Why not? I was in very good time, after all, you see."

"Ay; but the last roll call isn't over yet: and I often fear, Dick, that you will not be found in your rank there."

"What! do you think I'll desert?"

"I think you are already a deserter."

"I'll tell you what, Gray," said Dick, angrily, "I'm tired of being jested with about this nonsense; and I will hear no more of it."

"But I am not jesting, my lad: and if you listen patiently, I'll show you my meaning.

"A great Commander, whom both you and I are bound to obey, has given notice of a great roll call, and inspection, where every man must both answer to his name, and have his clothing, his arms, and accoutrements examined, his past conduct inquired into, and his fidelity proved, or else he will be treated as a deserter, and punished accordingly. Now, Dick, if I see you without any of this uniform, wearing, indeed, that of his enemies, and your weapons either rusty and useless, or employed against your Commander; if I hear you continually speaking ill of him, and know that you break all the rules of his service, and encourage others to do the same, am I not justified in fearing that he considers you a deserter; and asking you, when thinking how near the great roll call may be, 'How will you answer it?'"

"I know nothing of what you mean," said Dick, sullenly.

"Yes, you do," replied Gray; "your looks show it. Conscience tells you that Jesus Christ, the Captain of your salvation, has this charge to bring against you. You call yourself a Christian, and acknowledge yourself bound to be a follower of Christ. You receive his pay in the very air that supplies your breath, the food that supports you, and all the mercies which you enjoy. Can you deny this?"

"What weapons does he give me?" asked Dick, without answering the last question.

"All your senses and faculties are given you to be employed in his service; but more especially, as you have strong enemies to fight against, he gives you a sharp two-edged sword, even the Holy Bible,* and the powerful weapon of prayer, with which you may conquer all who oppose his government. Now, the first of these you never touch—it rests in the scabbard. The other you constantly employ against your Captain."

"That's false," exclaimed Dick: "for if ever I pray at all, I certainly don't pray *against* him."

* Heb. iv. 12. Eph. vi. 17.

"You certainly do. His work and his glory it is to save souls. Your prayer is, that they may be damned, and your own also. Why, Dick, if I were to write out the prayers that you put up in one day, aloud, you would be astonished at them."

"Pshaw! swearing is not praying."

"It is. The dreadful wishes that you utter must be addressed to some one. No mere man can do what you ask to be done against the eyes, limbs, and souls of your companions: and, besides, the great and terrible name of the most high God is so constantly in your mouth, at such times, as to prove that you are appealing to him; and the real meaning of these horrible prayers is, to implore that he will deliver you, and all around you, to the pit of hell. What say you to this, Dick? How will you answer it?"

"Pho! Gray, you are making too much fuss about trifles."

"Trifles! Are God's commandments trifles? Is the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, a trifle? Is the everlasting torment of hell a trifle?"

"Why, no; but I mean, that you are making out a worse case than is fair against me. There are many excuses."

"Well, name some."

"Why, then, temptation is so strong, and human nature so weak, that a man must be led astray sometimes: and, besides"—

"Stop, comrade—remember the roll call. Fatigue, the heat of the weather, and a little drink, made you drowsy last night: you might have dozed for half an hour longer, if the clock had not been altered; and you had a very good excuse to offer, as far as the weakness of human nature goes; but would that have saved you from punishment?"

"No; but the case is different."

"Different, indeed! Here is one single offence, merely a breach of a particular order, and committed against your fellow-man; yet for that you freely admit that you would have deserved to be punished. The other is one continued course of offences, persisted in day after day, year after year, against the dreadful majesty of the Lord God, who will not be mocked, and whose wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."

"But I have often heard you say, that Jesus Christ will save sinners."

'That brings us back to the question of desertion, Dick. Jesus Christ does indeed save sinners, the vilest of sinners who believe in him. But, then, becoming believers, they cease to serve sin. They no longer wear the devil's uniform, nor receive his wages; but form a little army, of which the Lord Jesus is, as I said, the Captain; and they are safe, and none but they. Now are you in the ranks of this army, or have you deserted to the enemy?"

"I'm sure I can't tell," said Dick.

"Then I must help you to find out. If you meet a soldier going on furlough, you easily discover his regiment by examining the badges. I'll tell you the uniform of Satan's troops, and you may judge of yourself by it. He clothes them in the works of the flesh, which are manifest, and these are some of them,—adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, hatred, variance, wrath, strife, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, thefts, false-witness, lyings, blasphemy"——

"Stop, stop!" cried Dick; I have not robbed nor murdered any body; so I am clear."

"Say not so," answered Gray. "If you have offended in ONE point, you are guilty of all."

"How do you know that?"

"God declares it in the Bible, the second chapter of St. James's Epistle, and tenth verse. One wilful sin, Dick, habitually committed, is like the number marked on your buttons. It will show what corps you belong to, though there were nothing else to prove it. Then let us see how Satan arms his followers: an angry temper; a lying, lewd, or swearing tongue; an eye roving after forbidden objects; feet hastening to works of revenge or mischief; hands stretched forth to smite, to defraud, or to grasp at strong drink; thoughts of covetousness, ambition, malice. He has a vast armoury, comrade; and though he does not often load one man with all, any more than each of us has sword and bayonet, musket, pike, and pistol, yet so long as all bear the stamp of his manufactory, and are laid up for the service of his garrison, whatever weapon you carry, you are his follower."

Dick Holmes began to look rather uneasy; the seriousness and earnestness of Gray prevented his turning it into a jest, as he would gladly have tried to do. Conscience, too, bore witness that much of the description suited him.

Gray observed his embarrassment, and went on, still more solemnly:—"Comrade, the hour approaches fast, and you must appear at the great roll call. Clothed and armed for the service of your Lord's enemies, oh, how will you answer it?"

"Why," said Dick, with a shrug, "I suppose I must share the fate of other deserters."

"And that fate is, the worm that dieth not, the fire that is not quenched; the devouring flame, everlasting burnings, outer darkness, where no ray of light can ever come; weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. O my friend, if the fear of a day's punishment, even without a reasonable hope of escaping it, induced you to make such exertion last night, will you not rouse yourself to one effort when a sure way of escape is opened from such horrors as these? The enemies of your soul would gladly put forward the clock, not for an idle jest, but that your last hour might strike, and your soul be dragged to the terrible muster, with all the badges of hell upon it."

"Sure enough, Gray, the thought is an awful one: but what can such a fellow as I do? I can't deny having, as you say, the devil's uniform on me, and his weapons too; and what should I get by delivering myself up, in such a trim?"

"A free pardon, comrade: a full pardon! Our Captain has said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out,' John vi. 37. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon,' Isa. lv. 7. There is more joy in that army, Dick, over one returning deserter, than over ninety and nine who never went away."

It seemed that the words of his pious comrade sunk deep into the soldier's heart. He considered for some time, and then said, "I have been in the enemy's camp so long, Gray, and am so used to his service, that if I got among God's people I should never be able to do as they do. I should be like a fish out of water, and quite at a loss."

"Why, Dick, when you enlisted to serve the king of England, were you sent to do duty in your old fustian jacket, with a flail for a weapon, and engaged on the hard terms of 'nothing a day, and to find yourself?'"

"No, truly," answered Dick, smiling; "his majesty

made a more reasonable bargain, or he wouldn't have got me into his ranks. I got good clothing, pay, quarters, and arms to enable me to fight his battles, which I'll do to my last drop of blood."

"Don't wrong the King of heaven, then, by imagining that he will deal less bountifully by his soldiers than an earthly monarch. You must strip off the disgraceful uniform of his enemies, and come to him, a poor, naked beggarly object; but he will presently clothe you, and arm you, and give you a place among his own troops, so beautifully described in the Revelation, chap. xix. 'And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.' That linen, we are elsewhere told, is the righteousness of the saints; not any merit that they have, or ever had of their own: but because they, that is, all who ever were or shall be redeemed from sin and death, 'washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,' Rev. vii. 14. But to return to the description of him who leads the armies of heaven. 'Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.' This is my Captain," added Gray, looking up with a countenance full of earnest, humble hope, "and this the army by which it is my heart's desire and prayer to be acknowledged as a comrade."

"They are strange and wonderful things," observed Dick Holmes.

"Ay, too strange and wonderful for the natural man to receive. To such they are foolishness. But, O comrade! if you would indeed study the blessed Bible with prayer for the help of the Holy Spirit, you would find what would make you loathe the ways of sin; you would feel your own sinfulness, and cry out, 'What must I do to be saved?'

And, once sending up that cry from a contrite heart, you would be shown the preciousness of this Captain of our salvation, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and you would never rest till he smiled upon you. He would smile on you, my friend, and gird you with strength unto the battle. He would make all your enemies flee before you; and, after a short campaign, clothe you with conquest. O to be able to say, with Paul, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith,' 2 Tim. iv. 7. These are the things to interest an immortal soul, not the toys and empty follies of filthy sins, with which Satan tries to keep us from looking into them But the bugle sounds, we must to our quarters. Only remember Dick; that I have set before you both your danger and its remedy. Both are certain, both eternal; and if you refuse the good, and choose the evil, I cannot prevent it; but the day will arrive, the roll will be called, and, O my deluded comrade, HOW WILL YOU ANSWER IT?"

Reader, perhaps you are not a soldier; but YOU TOO must appear at the great day of judgment, to give account of the deeds done in the body, AND HOW WILL YOU ANSWER IT?

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?

Sure I must fight, if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

Thy saints in all this glorious war
Shall conquer, though they're slain:
They see the triumph from afar,
And shall with Jesus reign.

When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine.

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No. 313.

THE

SOLDIER TWICE ENLISTED.

A TRUE STORY.

WILLIAM ——— had, in his early youth, been persuaded by a recruiting party to enlist into a regiment distinguished not only for good service abroad, but for very handsome appointments when at home. That is to say, they had fought well; and were recompensed by a great deal of gay clothing, which looked so very attractive to young William, that he forgot all the pain to be suffered by his poor old mother and affectionate sisters, in parting with him, and marched away with a bunch of ribands flying from the crown of his hat, and with little in his thoughts, except the fine figure that he should cut when he got his uniform on.

In this regiment William continued until he was about forty years old, when he got his discharge. He had lived as soldiers usually live; and how is that? Let soldiers tell; and happy will it be for that soldier who can say that he has lived in the fear of God, in the faith of Jesus Christ, and consequently in holiness; that he has prayed, not

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merely with the lips, but with the heart; not only on Sundays, but every day; that he has hated sin and reproved it, keeping his mind and conscience undefiled, letting no corrupt conversation proceed out of his mouth, and doing all things to the glory of God. Happy, I say, is the soldier who can declare that thus he lives: but our poor William was far, very far from being such a character. He scarcely knew that he had a soul to be saved, or lost; and which of the two it should be, he never suffered himself seriously to inquire. He knew not that he had any other enemies to fight against than those whom he could shoot or stab; and therefore he never watched against the worst of enemies, who lay in wait for his soul. He found that eating, and drinking, and sleeping, were pleasant to the flesh; and there were many things which his conscience told him were very sinful; but to fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind was to him the great business of life. If he was inclined for drinking, he had no fear of God to hinder him from drunkenness, though the fear of the lash often kept him sober. If his wicked passion disposed him to swear, he swore, and blasphemed the holy name of God, for there was no court-martial to punish him for that; and as for the great trial at the day of judgment, when, for every idle word that men speak they shall give account to God, he never allowed the dread of it to check a profane word, or to stifle an unclean thought. As a young soldier, he followed the bad example of some who were older, though the scripture says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil," Exod. xxiii. 2: and as he advanced in life, he set the same evil example to the new recruits, although God has commanded that none put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way, Rom. xiv. 13. Yet when, at the end of so many years, William left his corps, if any of his comrades had told him that he was a bad character, he would have resented it, perhaps even to shedding the blood of the persons who accused him; so awfully does the god of this world, the devil, blind the minds of them that believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4.

After quitting the service, William lived, as groom and as footman, with several officers and gentlemen. He was remarkably honest, very good tempered, and the fear of losing his place kept him sober. However, he seldom went to the house of God; nor do I think that family worship prevailed

in any place that ever he lived in. His masters and mistresses, no doubt, supposed themselves all going to heaven: but they never thought of inquiring whether their servants were not on the high road to hell.

William went on in this way for several years: getting a place when he could, and when he could not, working as a day-labourer. He lived near a large military establishment, and was often engaged as groom by those who visited it for a short time; so that his employment was very uncertain.

At last, when William was quite out of place, an officer came into the neighbourhood whose strange character made him a wonder to every body. Instead of taking it for granted that he was certainly in the right way, he had the prudence to make very particular inquiries about it; and how did he do this? Why, if you were in doubt as to your being in the direct road to the place whither you wished to go, and saw a finger-post a little way off, what would you do? march up to it, I dare say, and read what was upon it: or get your comrade to read it for you. Just so did this captain Frank. He knew that the Bible was the surest of all finger-posts; and to the Bible he went, to discover what was the right road. And so benevolent was he, that he counted it no trouble to read it to those who could not read it for themselves. The Bible showed him that the way which was chosen by many of his friends, who thought they could judge for themselves, was quite the wrong road: it also showed him what was the safe and pleasant path for his own feet. So he passed for a very strange, unsociable man, because he would not walk into a bog to oblige his friends; but kept his garments undefiled, while some of them were making theirs filthy with all the mud of uncleanness that abounds in the ways of sin.

A person who had a regard for poor William thought it would be a kind action to recommend him to captain Frank, who wanted a good groom: and he was very readily received.

The morning after he got into his new place, his master rang the bell; and William found him sitting at the table with a book open before him.

"William," said he, "have you been used to read your Bible much?"

"No, sir; I cannot read a word, the worse luck for me."

What William meant by *luck*, it is not easy to say. He had plenty of time, both in the army and out of it, to learn to read, if he had chosen; but *bad luck* is a convenient expression when people do not choose to blame themselves.

"Well, William," said the captain, "I suppose you have got others to read it to you."

"No, sir; nobody would take the trouble." But William had not asked any body. When he got hold of a newspaper, a playbill, or a foolish ballad, he was not long in finding some one to read it for him. If one refused, he would go to another. But he never carried a Bible about with the same determination to get at the knowledge of its contents.

The captain went on. "You have heard a good deal of it at church, at any rate."

"Why, no, sir: my time was so taken up, that I could not go to church."

But supposing this to be true, supposing that he had really asked leave of his different masters to go to church, and had been refused; supposing that, when out of service, he had not spent the Sunday in idling, gossiping, smoking, and drinking; yet, as a soldier, he must needs have heard the garrison chaplains perform the duty, for he was a protestant, and if he had chosen to listen, he might thus have learned much of the scriptures. His excuses proved that he had never desired the knowledge of God's ways.

"Indeed, William, you must be very ignorant, then," remarked the captain.

"It is true, sir: I am as ignorant as a heathen."

"Well, sit down, my man; and let me read to you." And then, after praying that the Holy Spirit would open their minds to see the wondrous things of God's law, he commenced with the first chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel; and not only read it to William, but explained what was meant by the name of Jesus, showing how we are all sinners before God, and must certainly all have perished had not a Saviour been found. And then he also told William how the name "Emmanuel," or "God with us," describes the nature of that adorable Saviour, "God manifest in the flesh," who left his throne of glory to suffer what sinners had deserved at the hands of Divine justice. He turned to the Old Testament, proved how strict the law is, and how we have all broken it: and he also read many of the prophecies

concerning the coming of Christ, and the great work which he should do.

William sat gazing on his master, and listening with wonder to what was so new and strange to him: and when they kneeled down to pray, he felt a sort of interest in the employment such as he had never known before. Very glad he was, when, on rising, his master told him that every evening and every morning they should spend an hour in the same way. So William went to the stable: and as for captain Frank, if he had not been as well employed as any other officer in his majesty's service, during the hour when all are at their own disposal, I know very little either of the use or the value of time.

For several weeks this went on; and William never had listened so anxiously for any sound as for the ringing of the parlour bell, that summoned him night and morning to hear the word of God. And why? William now felt that he was a sinner; that he needed a Saviour; and that if his soul was lost, it would be of no use to him that God had provided such a ransom for the guilty world. His master, too, used always, when reading the account of our Lord's miraculous cures, to show how the diseases of the soul must be healed, as well as those of the body, by the power of Christ; how sin is like the palsy, which keeps us from moving on in the path of holiness; how it is like the leprosy, which defiles the whole body, and makes it loathsome, as sin does the soul; how it keeps the eyes of the mind shut, that we cannot see the beauty of Christ, nor the terrors of hell that is open to swallow us up; how it makes the tongue silent as the dumb, when it ought to be praying to and praising God; and how it makes the ears deaf to the call of the Holy Spirit, and the feet lame that should run when he invites us. All these things could only, he said, be cured by the power of Christ; and where, in all the Bible, is it told that Christ ever cast out one poor afflicted creature who came to him?

Some few weeks after this reading was begun, the friend who first recommended William asked him how he liked his place; he answered, with tears in his eyes, that he could not bear the thought of his dear master leaving him. "He has taught me such things as I never heard or thought of before; and my memory is so bad, that when he goes I fear I shall forget it all. I wish I could follow my master over the world!"

He was reminded that his memory, like every other faculty, was the gift of God; and that he, in answer to prayer, would strengthen it to retain whatever was profitable. William was likewise admonished not to rest too much on the arm of flesh, since the gift which he had received was from the mercy of God alone.

Soon after this it was discovered that William had enlisted again. Under captain Frank? No; but, under the teaching of captain Frank, he had enlisted as a soldier and servant of Jesus Christ. He is the true Captain of our salvation; and William gave the following proofs of having become his soldier:—

I. He wore his clothing. He had put off the old man with his deeds—lying, slandering, evil speaking, foolish talking and jesting, idleness, corrupt communication, and all that had been contrary to Christ; and he had put on the new man, delighting in hearing the gospel, in prayer and praise. He was now clothed with humility; acknowledging and mourning over the guilt of sin in proportion as it lost its power over him, and delighting in the company of those who loved the Lord Jesus.

II. He bore his banner; that is, the cross. William's master was sneered at as a methodist by those of his own rank; and it seemed quite shocking that an officer and a gentleman should read the Bible and pray with a poor man! not to speak of the many poor men and women, and children too, who came in for a share of those good offices. Now, as it fared with the master, so with the man, and some of the gentlemen's servants mocked William, calling him a saint I wonder how they felt on Sunday, when joining in the Te Deum, and beseeching the Lord to number them with his saints in glory everlasting; but, however, they ridiculed William, and he answered by inviting them also to come and hear the Bible read. This he himself told to a friend, who asked him what they said; and it is plain that he not only bore this cross openly, but recommended it to others.

III. William fought the Lord's battles. Not merely by opposing the enemies of God in his own soul, but also by declaring the greatness, the love, and the power of this heavenly King to those who thought him a hard master, and who resisted his authority. To all his companions he spoke of him; and he told more than one person that he never

ceased thinking on what the Lord Jesus had done and suffered for poor sinners like him.

Besides all this, William had now clear views of the way in which a sinner may be saved. He used to think that he must earn heaven by some good work, and could not imagine how believing on the work of another could do it. But he said one day, quite unexpectedly, to his master, "I now see plainly, sir, that nothing but faith in Jesus Christ can save a man;" and while William thus declared his hope to be saved by faith alone, his daily conduct proved that his faith bore the fruit of good works; and that Jesus Christ was saving him *from* his sins, not *in* them. He often exclaimed to a young soldier, who for a time occupied a bed in his quarter, and who delighted as much as himself in the teaching of captain Frank, "O comrade, what a blessing it is to me that ever my master was sent here!"

These words expressed much; he felt that he had received a blessing, and he acknowledged that blessing to have been sent; so giving all glory to God, to him who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Ten weeks after he first entered his master's service, William walked on a very cold Sunday some miles to hear the gospel from a faithful minister, to whose teaching he loved to listen. Heated with his walk, he took off his heavy great coat; and, sitting near an open door, was exposed to the piercing air. The next day, he was dangerously ill; and suffered so much that he could scarcely speak; but what little he did say was expressive of the most perfect confidence and peace. He knew himself to be dying; he committed his spirit into the hands of Christ; he prayed, even when unable to articulate, as the movements of his lips plainly showed, accompanied by the most earnest looks of calm devotion. In reply to an inquiry by his master, he said that he was "very happy."

William died on the Thursday morning.

It was the writer of this tract who recommended him to his kind master; I saw with joy the progress of this blessed work, and I often visit his grave with feelings of delight and gratitude not to be expressed; for surely I know that Jesus Christ has said, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," John vi. 47.

Reader, I have stated nothing in this little tract but what is strictly true; and now let me ask you, Whether you do not

see the hand of God in it? William's days were very nearly ended; but none could know it, save only He by whom our years are numbered. Was it not most providential that such a teacher was sent, to warn the sinner to turn from his evil ways, to point him to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, and to the path which leads to heaven? If you deny this, you cannot surely believe that there is an Almighty Creator and Governor of the world. You are ignorant of what the very heathens are condemned for not knowing, Rom. i. 20, 21, and you have a dreadful account to render unto the Lord for your neglect of the gift of reason with which he has endued you; as well as of the opportunities which have been afforded to you of becoming acquainted with his word and ways.

But perhaps you are ready to confess that the hand of God was here; and, while you rejoice that the poor soldier was brought by such merciful means to the happy state in which he died, you hope that before your time comes the same blessing may be yours. My friend, the Lord is now setting before you the very same gift which poor William so thankfully accepted. This little narrative, in showing you William's guilt and danger, makes known your own; in telling you how Christ sought and saved him, it also tells you that he seeks and is willing to save you. Your time may be as short, and your death as near, as his was when he first saw his kind master. That officer was not sent *by chance* to William's neighbourhood; neither did chance place this paper in your hands. It may be the last warning that is to be afforded you; and as surely as William would have perished, had he rejected the offered mercy, pardon, and salvation, through the atonement of Christ; so surely will you perish if you turn away from the gracious invitation which I now repeat—the invitation of Jesus Christ—"Look unto me, and be ye saved," Isa. xlv. 22. For, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life."

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Considerable Allowance to Subscribers and Booksellers.

No. 73.

SATURDAY NIGHT

AND

SUNDAY MORNING.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN WILLIAM READY AND ROBERT WISE AT THE PAY TABLE.

LONDON:

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A DIALOGUE, &c.

William Ready. WELL, Bob, suppose we have the other pot to drink success to trade; master seems in good spirits, and it is but just gone ten; and, besides, we can lie an hour longer for it in the morning.

Robert Wise. No; I cannot stay any longer: and as for the other pot, it is that which does all the mischief; for I have often seen, that as fast as the beer runs *in*, common sense runs *out*, until a man becomes as light, and noisy, and full of vaporous fumes, as the barrel he has just emptied. Besides, I have got a wife and family to provide for at home, and it will be eleven o'clock now before we have made our marketing. As to drinking success to trade, I think trade is likely to flourish most when the least drink is going forward. And now we are upon the subject, I wish our master would pay the men at home, and not bring them to the public house; they can find the way there fast enough without that. This is the worst fault I have to find with our master—he pays his men so late on the Saturday night, that one finds it hard work to get one's little matters all settled, without breaking in upon the Sabbath-day. I have often told him so, but he does not seem to take much concern about it.

Wm. Breaking in upon the Sabbath-day! Why, I always thought that Sunday was intended as a day of rest and recreation. We are not obliged to be up at six o'clock to work; and what is the odds of having a few matters to do on the Sunday morning? I think, Bob, you have been among the religious folks, and they are making you as stiff and precise as themselves. I hope you are not

going to turn Methodist—they are a set of unhappy people, and want to make every body as melancholy as they are. I was just going to ask you to join a pleasant party, to take a little pleasure on the water to-morrow. There is Sam Flight, and his wife—Tom Worthy, and his sweetheart—me and my wife—you and yours—but, I suppose, from what you have just now said about the Sunday, it is of no use asking you.

Rob. None at all. You must know there are many strong reasons why I cannot consent to violate and profane the Lord's day.

Wm. Violate and profane the Lord's day! What. To take a little innocent recreation after slaving hard all the week—do you call this violating and profaning the Lord's day?

Rob. Indeed I do; and I don't know how any one can call it otherwise, who thinks rightly on the matter. I will give you some of my reasons for saying so, if you will hear them.

Wm. I should like to hear what mighty reason you can give, why a man should not take a little pleasure, only because it happens to be on a Sunday.

Rob. Well, then you must know, first of all, that the Sabbath-day was intended by the Almighty to be a day of rest and cessation from labour, as we read, Genesis ii. 3. "And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he had rested from all his work." Now what you propose as recreation, is, in fact, harder work than any we do all the week; and, for my part, I have no notion of rowing in a boat for hours together, for the sake of rest and recreation and to volunteer myself to the toil of a galley slave, after slaving hard all the week, as you called it. Besides, I shudder when I hear of those awful events which very frequently occur on the Sabbath-day. It was but yesterday that I read in the paper of two parties who were launched into eternity while they were taking their pleasure on the water last Sunday. A bad preparation, surely for such a change!

Besides, you know it is not more than three years ago, when a party of fifteen young men and women were every one drowned, and the minister of our town preached a most affecting discourse on the evil and danger of Sabbath-breaking. He handled his subject in such a manner, as made the tears trickle down from every eye; and, in some particular parts, the sighs and sobs of the congregation almost stopped the minister in his sermon. I shall not forget it the longest day I live. I have had enough of Sabbath-breaking ever since. And then, to say no more about the labour and the danger of such sport, it cannot be done without money; and a man spends as much in this way on a Sunday, as would almost keep his family half the week—besides coming home at night with weary bones, a guilty conscience, and an empty pocket into the bargain.

Wm. Well, I see 'tis of no use arguing with you. I shall go and see if they have spoken for the boat, and got all things ready; for we mean to start soon in the morning.

Rob. Nay, man, but stay a minute or two longer, for I have got another reason stronger than all the rest put together; and that is, you have the commandments of God against you. He has said, "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy; six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God:" you may read more of it in Exodus xx. 8, 9, 10. In Exodus xxxi. 14, Jehovah speaks thus: "Ye shall keep my Sabbath, for it is holy unto you; every one that defileth it shall be put to death." And this law was actually put in force among the Israelites, as we read in Numbers xv. 32, 34, 35, 36. "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath-day; and they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall surely be put to death, and all the

congregation shall stone him with stones, without the camp: and all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses." Well might the Apostle say, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Now as to the manner of keeping the Sabbath, I will just mention one text of Scripture more; and this, as well as all the rest, is point blank against you. Isaiah lviii. 13, 14, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing *thine own ways*, nor finding *thine own pleasure*, nor speaking *thine own words;* then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Now, if these reasons are not enough to satisfy you, I will add another—

Wm. Another! no, no; I don't want any more reasons. But give over this sort of preaching, and say you will go. I'll warrant you it will be a fine day, and we shall all be very happy.

Rob. No, William, I cannot go with you, for sure I am, there is no happiness where the blessing of God is not; much less is happiness to be found in the way of transgression, for the Bible says, "The way of transgressors is hard" But as I dare not spend the Sunday in your way, let me invite you to spend it in the way that Christian people do; and, to encourage you, I will say, in the language of Moses to his brother in-law, Numbers x. 29, 32, "We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: and it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee."

Wm. I begin to think—indeed I have thought so

ever since my good old mother died, that it is not quite right to neglect church on the Sunday; and I must honestly tell you, I have, more than once or twice, had some dismal pangs of conscience, when, in spite of all my endeavours to forget it, I have thought upon the foolish manner in which I have spent the past day; and then, on the Monday morning, I feel as if every thing was wrong about me. I come to work with a heavy heart, while you appear as blithe as a lark, and as happy as a prince—tell me, Bob, how it is you pass your Sundays?

Rob. I'll do that with pleasure; and if you can produce but half as many good reasons against my way of spending the Sabbath, as I have against yours, then I'll say no more. Well, then, you must know, that when Saturday evening comes—

Wm. Saturday evening!—Why, shopmate, I asked you how you employed the Sunday—and not what you do on the Saturday. Does your Sunday begin on the Saturday? This is making a long Sunday of it, indeed.

Rob. I always consider Saturday evening as the preparation for Sunday; and as to the length of it, it always flies too fast for me—

> The gladness of that happy day,
> My soul would wish it long to stay.

Wm. Well, then, on Saturday evening—what then?

Rob. Why then my wife and little ones are all as busy as if they were getting ready to go to court the next morning; indeed, I always count the Sabbath as the grand court day of the King of kings; for, as the hymn says—

> "The King, himself, comes near,
> And feasts his saints to-day;
> Here we may sit, and see him here,
> And love, and praise, and pray."

The children's playthings are all put away—shoes all cleaned—shirts and things all aired and laid ready for the morning—house made tidy—and my wife waiting till I come home, to bring her my wages —and I must be going soon, else she will begin to think something has happened.

Wm. Yes; I always thought your wife one of a thousand—I wish I could get my old woman to be as notable as yours; however, I must not find fault with her, I might easily have found a much worse.

Rob. Well, then, as I said, all things being ready on Saturday night, we offer up our praises to Almighty God for the mercies of the past week, and pray, that, with the light of the coming day, the light of his countenance may shine upon our souls.

"Safely through another week,
God has brought us on our way;
Let us now a blessing seek
On th' approaching Sabbath-day;
Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest"

Then we go to bed, rest our weary limbs, and always welcome the opening of another Sabbath-day.

Wm Why this is making the most of a good thing; but don't you lie an hour or two longer in the morning, after the labour of the week?

Rob. As to that, I'll tell you. I rise at my usual hour, read the Bible alone, and pray to the Lord, that we may "begin, continue, and end," the sacred day in the fear of God.

Wm. I am afraid you have got too much religion for me; I shall not much like your way. I always thought if I went to church once on a Sunday, I did my duty quite well enough.

Rob. Too much religion! That is impossible, if a man's heart is in the right place. If so be that he has tasted that the Lord is gracious, he will be coming

to him; and, as a new-born babe, desire the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby, as the Apostle Peter speaks. Too much religion! Why, religion is happiness: and you never yet knew any one have too much happiness.

Wm. Well, after the morning prayer and reading the Bible, what then?

Rob. Why, then I come down, and find the children all clean, wife ready with the breakfast; and as soon as that is over, we prepare for family worship, which we begin with a hymn; the little ones all join —I set the tune, and my Sarah has got a pretty voice We often begin the Sabbath with

> "Welcome, sweet day of rest,
> That saw the Lord arise;
> Welcome to this reviving breast,
> And these rejoicing eyes."

Then we all kneel down, and pray for a Sabbath-day's blessing, never forgetting to commend our minister to the grace of God; that he would be pleased to give him the tongue of the learned, that he may know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

Wm. I should think you have had praying and singing enough for one day. I should be prayed and sung to death, with so much religion.

Rob. Enough! man. The best of it is not yet begun. There is the public worship; and when the hour arrives, my heart is ready to cry out with David, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God! A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." It would do your heart good to see our good minister go up the pulpit stairs; he looks like a man that is going to plead with God on behalf of his people. After he has offered up a silent prayer, he looks round upon the congregation with so much affection, that you

would think we were all his own children. He is always upon one grand subject, as he calls it—Jesus Christ, and him crucified. That was his first text, when he first came to us. "I am determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. ii. 2.) And he has kept good his determination ever since.

Wm. I think I should not much like your minister. According to your account, he is always harping upon one string.

Rob. Harping upon one string! Yes, truly; but it is a string on which he plays a thousand delightful tunes. Christ, and him crucified! Why, man, this is the music of heaven, and no wonder it should gladden the hearts of sinners upon earth. I could listen to it for ever. Let me tell you, Bill; you and I are sinners, and we stand in need of a Saviour; we are great sinners, and we need a great Saviour; now, just such a Saviour is Jesus Christ, as St. Paul says, —"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. i. 15.) It is the blood of Christ that takes away our sins; it is the righteousness of Christ that justifies us before God; it is the Spirit of Christ that makes us holy; it is the consolation of Christ that gives comfort in affliction; it is the grace of Christ that supports us when we come to die: it is the smile of Christ that gives boldness in the day of judgment; and it is the presence of Christ that makes heaven the blessed place it is. In short, "Christ is all and in all," as the Apostle has it in another place.

Wm. I confess I never heard so much about Christ before. I always thought that if a man did as well as he could, he need not concern himself so much about Christ and religion.

Rob. I thought so once, until I heard our good minister preach from this text, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is

written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." (Gal. iii. 10.) I then found myself to be a guilty, condemned sinner. I began to pray for mercy, and I trust I have not prayed in vain: for Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

Wm. I think I should like to hear your minister preach: but surely you don't think there can be any harm in taking a walk into the fields in the afternoon, after going to church in the morning.

Rob. Why as to that—Now suppose you come to shop on Monday morning, and work till twelve o'clock, and then go and work for another master the rest of the day—would this be doing your duty to your own master? Would he be pleased with it? Would he not justly scotch you in your reckoning, when Saturday night came? So our blessed Lord says, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." (Matt. vi. 24.) Now I love my divine Master, and never think I can do enough for him. I love his service also; it is "perfect freedom."

Wm. Well, I think I should like to spend a Sunday with you, but I can't to-morrow; the party is all made up, except *you;* and as you won't go, we must either get somebody else, or go as we are.

Rob. My dear fellow, let me persuade you not; you seem to be somewhat convinced of the evil of Sabbath-breaking, and I am sure you will not be happy. Your conscience has often warned and checked you; and you will be sinning against light, and against this friendly caution. What, if God should take you away with a stroke; you have no security against it, and especially in the way of disobedience; for, "he, that being often reproved,

hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. xxix. 1.)

Wm. Why you seem to have all the argument on your side. Well, if I thought they would not laugh at me, and call me a Methodist, I would give it up, and go along with you.

Rob. Laugh at you, and call you a Methodist! Why let them laugh, and let them call. So the gay pleasure-takers might have laughed at Noah while he was preparing the ark; but the flood came, and drowned them all, and their laughter was turned into bitter crying when they found themselves shut out. This might have been the case, also, with the scoffers who dwelt in guilty Sodom; but the same day that Lot left the place, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

Wm. Well, I'll consider of it.

Rob. I hope you will, and may God enable you to determine on the side of Christ, and your immortal soul: this is true wisdom; and you will find her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace.—But I must be going; I have told you but half the delightful work of the Sabbath-day; come, and prove the rest. I will only just say, the other half of the day becomes sweeter and sweeter as one enters into the spirit of it; and I sometimes think, if there is so much comfort in the worship of God on earth, then what must heaven be!

"Oh! the delights, the heavenly joys,
The transports of the place;
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace!"

Now, compare your way of spending Sunday with mine, and let any man of common sense be the judge, and I'll venture to say he will give it in my favour. You come home, half worn out with recreation, as you call it—money all spent—wife perhaps

out of humour—the children cross and sleepy—and when you lie down at night, you cannot ask God's blessing on the past day, but are obliged to skulk to bed like a thief that is afraid to be taken before his judge. But in my way of spending the Sabbath, our bodies are rested from the toils of the past week, our spirits are refreshed by the blessing of God; it maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow therewith; and we can lie down at night with a cheerful heart, expressing our gratitude to our Heavenly Father in devout adoration, and songs of praise.

"Come bless the Lord, whose love assigns
So sweet a rest to wearied minds;
Provides an antepast of heaven,
And gives this day the food of seven.

"Oh! that our thoughts and thanks may rise,
As grateful incense to the skies;
And draw from heaven that sweet repose,
Which none but he that feels it knows.

"This heavenly calm within the breast,
Is the dear pledge of glorious rest,
Which for the church of God remains,
The end of cares, the end of pains.

"In holy duties let the day,
In holy pleasures pass away;
How sweet a Sabbath thus to spend,
In hope of one that ne'er shall end!

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No. 250.

MISSIONS AT HOME.

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF 'THE TWO OLD MEN,' &c. &c.

Translated from the French.

Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. John iv. 35, 36.

THE spring of 1825 had just commenced, and the followers of the truth began to hold the social meetings which are customary at that delightful season, when all nature appears to revive, and strongly reminds us of the pleasing hopes which these assemblies excite in the hearts of true Christians.

Three friends, closely united by the indissoluble bond of love to Christ, had just quitted one of these meetings, where several eloquent speakers had dwelt upon the glorious privilege which the Lord confers upon his children, in permitting them to be instruments of his mercies towards the nations which yet sit in darkness and the shadow of death, in the bondage of idolatry and unbelief, far from that eternal life which is in Christ Jesus. These children of God (whom I will denote by the names of Edward, Philip, and James) were deeply interested by the truths and the pressing exhortations they had heard. The conversation, which was prolonged by extending their walk into the country, principally turned upon the adorable faithfulness of God, who, by his mysterious and all-powerful providence, appoints, prepares, and employs the wisest and best-arranged plans for carrying ond an accomplishing the final and everlasting welfare of his beloved

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799
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Church, which he has himself chosen and gathered from the midst of all people and nations of the children of men.

Philip did not take so large a part in the conversation as his two friends. He appeared absorbed in his own reflections. His companions remarked this. "It is true," said he, "I am deeply impressed by the pleasing accounts we have heard, and the interesting details of courage and perseverance in spreading the glad tidings of the Gospel in countries where they have not, till lately, been made known. I am humbled, as well as deeply moved, when I reflect upon the ardent zeal and entire devotedness of spirit with which my fellow-men exert themselves to extend the kingdom of our merciful and glorious Redeemer. I readily acknowledge that such labours are beyond human praise, and that they can only be justly appreciated and duly recompensed by the Lord, in whose name alone they are undertaken and carried on; but I I cannot help reflecting upon the wretched state of our countrymen, and the inhabitants of our immediate neighbourhood. Many of them, alas! are as ignorant of eternal life as the Chinese or Hindoos; and, although bearing the name of Christians, are left to themselves to perish miserably in ignorance or vain hopes; while, at eight or ten thousand miles' distance, the worshippers of wood and stone have their attention called to these things—and we rejoice to hear that many amongst them are born again to a heavenly inheritance, and have already attained the crown of everlasting life. I cannot but feel deeply pained at this contrast; and I would ask, whether the nominal Christian, perishing in ignorance and sin, is not *equally* worthy of our attention? Should not his case excite a more lively interest in our minds, from the danger of his being overtaken by the sleep of death while he is flattering himself that he possesses life, and prides himself on his superiority to others in being called a Christian? These thoughts came powerfully to my mind during the meeting, and I felt as much inclined to deplore the unhappy state of many of my fellow-countrymen, as to lament for the poor Hindoo widow, whom the cruel and superstitious rites of her false religion require to ascend the funeral pile of her deceased husband, there to submit to a cruel death."

Edward admitted that such reflections were well

founded, and that they ought to bring forth fruit in every real follower of Christ; but he thought they would be found too strong, and more alarming than the case in reality required.

"I do not think that I have expressed myself too strongly," said Philip; "and, if you please, you may easily satisfy yourself whether the painful statement I have made is well founded. Yonder is the high road: about this time many persons are returning home from market—let us ascertain their opinions as to the state of their souls."

The three friends then turned to the high road, and saw several groups of peasants conversing aloud, according to their usual custom.

Philip showed a few religious tracts, and said, "I will drop these at the turning of the road—they will be picked up by the party who follow us, and we shall hear their observations. Let us cross the road between those carts, so that they may not perceive that we drop the tracts, lest they should give them to us again, or be afraid to speak their opinions respecting them in our hearing."

This plan was adopted. The tracts were picked up by two countrymen, who turned towards the rest of their party, saying, "Here is some of the good seed, as they call it, which our saints now-a-days scatter along the roads." Their companions laughed, and said, "Well, let us hear some of it."—"Why should we trouble ourselves about them?" replied the first speaker: "they are addressed to those who are dead in sin, as they call it; and as for us, we are alive and hearty."

Some further conversation of the same sort followed. At last, an aged woman said, "You may talk in this manner, if you please, about the books and the good folks that drop them; but I know, for my own part, that some of them have done me good; and if you don't care for them, give them to me."—"Here, mother," said one of the countrymen; "here's mine; you are welcome to it; and I see it is about old men, so that I have no need of it."—"But don't you need a Saviour?" said the aged female. "Oh, as to that," replied he, "I don't trouble myself about it. Perhaps I might think about it if I were to be ill: but you see I am very well at present." He then bega to whistle a tune.

The aged female did not reply; and the three friends allowed the party to pass them: they were satisfied that, in this instance at least, the painful description of Philip was not exaggerated. "This truly is darkness," said James. "Are these the Christians amongst whom we live? Are our villages inhabited by characters like these? Surely it is not right to neglect them, while we send our assistance to foreign lands. Ought not we to exert ourselves for our own people, and send the word of truth to them? Philip, do you know where these people live?

Philip.—"Unless I am mistaken, the aged woman resides at G——, the village at the foot of yonder mountain, near J——. I think I saw her there a few days ago."

Edward.—"I know a poor mechanic who is ill, and at present lives in that village, and I have for some time intended to call and see him. If you feel inclined, we will walk there: perhaps God may enable us to speak some of the words of eternal life."

James.—"So you are ready to begin this without delay? Philip will not be sorry to see a beginning of these *Missions at Home*, of which he has often spoken, and which occupy his mind to-day even more than usual."

Philip.—"Nothing could please me better, and certainly I will not despise 'the day of small things.' (Zech. iv. 10.) Who can sow, unless the ground has first been ploughed? Who can gather the brushwood into fagots, unless it has been cut? Then let us go forward; and let us be messengers of glad tidings, if the Lord, who I trust is with us, will permit."

Similar conversation occupied them during their walk, and the new missionaries soon reached the entrance of the village. Near the first house there was a stile; and a group of children, about ten or twelve years of age, were coming along the path. Philip offered them a tract They stopped, and seemed unwilling to take it.*

"What are you afraid of?" said Philip, kindly: "This book contains the truths of the word of God; it is written for young persons: take it, my dear children, read it,

* The reader will remember, that the circumstances related in this tract occurred in a part of the continent, where the peasantry are cautioned by their superiors against listening to the doctrines of truth. We should rejoice that in many respects our country is differently situated; and although the same ignorance, as to the truths of salvation, too generally prevails, yet tracts are almost always received with avidity.— *Translator.*

and you will learn how to love Christ Jesus our Saviour."

"No, no!" exclaimed several of the children; "we won't have it—it is a naughty book, full of lies."

Philip.—"You are mistaken, my children. Look at the title—'The Little Christian:'—you will see that it is not contrary to the word of God."

"Oh, it is all the same," said a girl; "we won't have it—we don't want any religious books."

The friends walked on; and were immediately assailed by abusive language from a young man in a neighbouring garden, who had heard what passed. He was in a violent passion; and, lifting up his spade, he said, in a threatening tone, "Don't come and bring your poisonous books here."

"You are mistaken," said Philip, holding a tract towards him; "they tell us about the salvation which Christ obtained for us by his sufferings upon the Cross."

"I don't care for you or your books either," said the young man, seizing the tract, and tearing it.

"What frantic folly! what pride and unbelief!" said James, as they left this unhappy man. "Even the heathen receive those who tell them of God and of Christ in a kinder manner. What enmity and hatred to the truth! Philip, I do not wonder that you are grieved."

Edward.—"Perhaps your sorrow may at last be succeeded by joy. I should not be surprised if the man who just now insulted us, has already picked up the pieces of the tract, and is reading its contents! But, this is the house—the poor man I mentioned lives here. Let us enter; and may the blessing of God go with us!"

They stopped at the door of a small room level with the ground; the threshold was merely paved with a few rough stones, and there was more paper than glass in the little window.

The friends knocked at the door; a voice told them to come in, and they found themselves in a very small room. Near the window sat a man who evidently was in a state of great poverty: before him was a small table, on which were some old books and papers. "Gentlemen," said he, "I beg your pardon for not opening the door, but I am unable to rise from my seat—you may perceive that one of my legs has been cut off."

Edward.—" There is no occasion to make any excuse, my poor Martin. I heard that you had undergone that operation, and I came to see if I could do any thing for you."

Martin.—" Gentlemen, pray be seated—there is a chair and a stool ; and perhaps one of you will not object to sit at the foot of my bed."

James.—" We can do very well, and shall be glad to rest ourselves a few minutes."

Martin.—" Ah, sir, the people of the house neglect me very sadly : my allowance is very small, and I hardly dare ask for any thing : you may see they scarcely sweep my floor "

Philip.—" You appear to employ yourself in reading and writing : I suppose your books are such as comfort and support you in your troubles."

Martin.—" I have a little variety, sir.—Just now I was engaged in copying some lines from the ' *Poetical Magazine, or the Muses' Almanack:*' they are very pretty verses."

Philip.—" Do they contain any thing respecting the soul—any thing which can *really* console you in your afflictions ?"

Martin, (with surprise.)—" O, I only do it for my amusement : it serves to pass away a few hours ; for a day seems very long when I am entirely alone, as I cannot move from my chair."

Edward.—" My friend, do you think that a man can with truth say he is *alone*, even when there is no other person present ?"

Martin.—" Why, sir, perhaps it is not right to say so, for God is every where ; but one cannot always be thinking about serious things, or saying prayers."

Edward.—" But, Martin, have you kept the promise you made me ? Do you read the Bible regularly ?"

Martin.—" Here it is, sir ; you see it is upon my table : I read some chapters every day."

Philip.—" Do you understand what you read? Do you like to read the Bible ?"

Martin.—" I like best to read the histories of David and the Kings, and their wars. I also read the Gospels sometimes. But I do not understand much of the other parts, particularly the Epistles."

Edward.—" But you told me something about one of

your neighbours: I thought she would have been able to explain to you some passages which you might not understand."

Martin.—"She is very kind, and ready to assist me, but she has little or no more learning than myself; and she now lodges quite at the other end of the village, so that she does not often call."

James.—"Does not the Minister visit you sometimes?"

Martin.—"I am not a regular parishioner; I am only a lodger; and I don't much think he likes to explain the Bible at people's houses. He called to see me about three weeks ago; and when he found I could read, he said he would send me a few books to amuse me. He sent me this poetry, and these others."*

Edward.—"I suppose you are able to go to church every Sunday?"

Martin.—"I go as often as I can; but I still feel much pain where my leg was cut off."

Philip.—"Do you recollect any of the last sermon you heard?"

Martin.—"Yes, it was a fortnight ago: I wrote down the text; here it is, (Prov. xix. 15,) 'Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep, and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.' It was a capital sermon, and all the village were much pleased with it."

Philip.—"Do you recollect any part of the sermon?"

Martin.—"There was a good deal about the advantages of working diligently. The minister showed us that this was the way to get on in the world, to lay by something against we grow old, and to procure the esteem of all good honest people."

Philip.—"So far well. But was there nothing about heaven?"

Martin.—"Oh yes, sir: I had forgot: he told us, towards the end, that a laborious and diligent life was the best preservative against temptations and evil ways, and that it was also an excellent way to merit salvation; and that a man who spent his life in a proper and virtuous manner, when on his death-bed would recollect his good conduct with pleasure and satisfaction, and would not be afraid to give an account of his actions to God."

* The reader is reminded that the circumstances related in these pages occurred in a foreign land.

Philip.—" What! did he say nothing about the Saviour, and his offering himself for our sins ?"

Martin.—" Yes; he said that we must be saved by the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ: but he did not say much about it, for every body knows that we must be saved by Christ."

Philip.—" Then, my good friend you are aware that you need a Saviour, and that you cannot enter into heaven excepting by him ?"

Martin.—" Certainly, sir: I do not think myself good enough to be saved without his help; and I hope God will accept me, when I have done what he requires of me."

Philip.—" Do you know what God requires of you ?"

Martin replied like those 'who, being ignorant of God's righteousness, go about to establish their own righteousness,' (Rom. x 3,) thinking that they can with their own strength perform the works required by God's holy law. He showed that he was wholly ignorant of the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Philip and his friends declared to him the truths of the Gospel, and left with him a few tracts, which contained a clear summary of the true and only way of salvation, by the real faith of the heart in the sacrifice and expiation of the Son of God, as set forth and explained in the Holy Scriptures. They urged Martin to read these little treatises, rather than the Magazine; and told him to lend them to the neighbours when they called. They then left him, promising that they would return before long, if nothing unforeseen prevented.

About a fortnight afterwards our *new Missionaries* again went to the village. As they passed the first house, they saw the young man who tore the tract—he was pruning his vines—and they expected he would again insult them; but were much pleased to find that he took off his hat, and made them a low bow. The three friends returned his salute as they passed; and Edward said to his companions, with a smile, " Well, was I a true prophet when I said that perhaps this poor man might collect the pieces of the tract and read them? Let us take courage; here is one instance of improvement at least. We shall see how our sick man goes on."

Martin was sitting at his little table, and the Bible

was open before him! A sheet of paper lay by it; and when the friends entered, Martin was copying out a passage from the Prophet Isaiah.

"Well, Martin," said Edward, "so you are always at your studies?"

"I delight in them," replied Martin in a cheerful tone, which agreeably surprised the friends; adding, "I have put aside that book of foolish poetry."

Philip.—"How is this, Martin? Is that the way you treat your old friends and companions?"

Martin smiled, and said, "I need not tell you, sir, that one soon becomes tired of all things which are not really good; and I believe I can assure you that I like *this* friend far better than the other." As he spoke, he took hold of the Bible with an expression of earnestness. "In truth, since you were here I have read hardly any thing but this precious book; and I have copied out several passages."

Philip.—"What are those marks in the book?"

Martin.—"I read several times one of the tracts you left, and examined all the texts referred to in it. These marks point out the places, and I am copying them."

Philip.—"What are you now writing?"

Martin read it: it was the beautiful passage, (Isaiah lxi. 10,) 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.'

Philip.—"Who is represented as saying this?"

Martin.—"Is it not the prophet?"

Philip.—"It is the church of the redeemed of the Lord, and, consequently, includes the prophet, who is one of them. They are the well beloved of the Lord; it includes every soul that has received the promise of God, which is the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus. Every true disciple of Christ is entitled to adopt that language. He should thus rejoice in his God; and glory in his everlasting salvation, for he possesses it, and should delight therein."

The invalid was not advanced thus far in the knowledge of the truth. His understanding had not yet received many of the heavenly gifts, so that he did not comprehend what had just been told him: he replied,

" We must do our utmost to get this salvation, and the whole of our lives will not be too long for such a work.'

Philip.—" Certainly not too long, nor long enough, to do—what Christ has done for us! In that respect, Martin, you are correct; and I agree with you, that, if you try to perform the great work of suffering and expiation for sin, which the Son of God accomplished, you will not succeed, even though your whole life were spent in such endeavours, and ten thousand other lives in addition, if they were given to you."

Philip then took the Word of truth; and, after having besought God to bless what he was about to say, he began to explain the doctrine of the satisfaction which our blessed Lord freely offered to the unchangeable righteousness of God for his people—for those whom the Father has given to Him, that He should give them eternal life, (John xvii. 2;) and for whom 'He who is the Head of the body, even of the church,' (Col. i. 18—22,) offered up himself as a perfect and sufficient sacrifice. Heb. x. 10.

Martin listened very attentively to *the Missionary*. It was easy to perceive that the truth which he had before read in the Scriptures, and which was now more fully opened to him, had made an impression upon him, and that the errors of unbelief, and confidence in his own righteousness, which naturally spring up in the heart of man, were giving way before the peaceable, yet powerful conviction which the sovereign grace of God bestows, when it enters and descends, (if the expression may be used,) to take up its abode in a heart renewed by God the Holy Spirit.

Martin then asked, " How can a sinner be delivered from the condemnation which he deserves?"

Philip replied in the words of Scripture,—that, each sin being a transgression of the law, every sinner was under the sentence of condemnation, and deserved to receive the just reward of his evil deeds:—That there is no difference in this respect, for that 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;' 'there is not a just man on earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.' (Rom. iii. 23; Ecc. vii. 20.) And though all have not sinned to the same extent, yet no one has kept the commandments of God; but, on the contrary, all, without exception, are

sinners in His sight:—All are included under this deserved sentence of condemnation. It includes those, who, like the heathen, sinned against *the light of conscience*, as the Holy Spirit declares by the Apostle; 'For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another,' (Rom. ii. 14, 15.) And it includes those also, who, like the Jews and nominal Christians, sin against *the revealed law* of God. So that God is in all things just; and it is perfectly consistent with his justice to punish every man, without any one being able to complain that his punishment is not justly deserved.

Philip thoroughly proved this doctrine of truth by various passages of Scripture which he quoted, and which the reader can also examine, and will desire to do so, if, like poor Martin, he has received the love of the truth. The following were amongst them James ii. 10; 1 John iii. 4; Rom. ii. 8, 9; Eph. v. 6; Ezek. xviii. 4; Rom. vi. 23; iii. 9—18; Eph. ii. 1—3. Many other similar passages might be added.

Philip then referred again to the Scriptures, and turned to John xvii. 3; Rom. iv. 4—6, 16; Eph. ii. 8, 9; Titus iii. 5, 6; 1 John ii. 12; Acts iv. 12; Isa. liii. 6, 11, 12; Heb. ix. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 24; John iv. 34; xix. 30; Ps. ciii. 12; xxxii. 1, 2; 1 John i. 7; Isa. i. 18; Heb. viii. 12; Rom. vi. 14, 15; vii. 1—6; viii. 2. From these, and others of like import, he showed that salvation is *a free gift*, proceeding only from the sovereign grace of the Father of our Lord Jesus; and is manifested unto sinners, who are the objects of this grace, by the word of life, which the Holy Spirit imparts with power and efficacy to the hearts of those whom God hath loved, (Eph. ii. 4,) and hath redeemed from the curse of the law, by laying their sins and their punishment upon His only and well-beloved Son, (Gal. iii. 13; iv. 4, 5,) who took upon him our nature, and became man for the ransom of his people, even the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven. (Heb. xii. 23.) He proved that this salvation could not be obtained through any works or deservings of our own, since it

had been accomplished through the good pleasure of the Father, ' according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began ;' (2 Tim. i. 9 ;) who is the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world ; forasmuch as his people were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Rev. xiii. 8 ; 1 Pet. i. 18—20.

He then showed that this salvation is wholly of grace, in the fullest extent and meaning of the word. He also explained that this salvation is wholly the work of Christ, perfect God and perfect Man, who, by taking upon him our nature, became one with his people, and is appointed the Head of his body the Church ; and himself bore the weight of that condemnation, beneath which every member of that body must otherwise have fallen—' redeeming us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us.' Gal. iii. 13.

As Martin did not appear to comprehend sufficiently respecting this salvation, complete and finished for the people of Christ, Philip made use of several illustrations which God was pleased to bless to the instruction of the new convert.

Martin listened attentively to the words of Philip, and at length exclaimed, " What love ! what pity ! I never till now considered how great was the price which was paid for our salvation.—And did our kind Saviour suffer thus for sinners ?—yes, for all have sinned, and I certainly for one."

" Do you see the way of peace ?" said James, " and everlasting life ?"

Martin replied : " I dare not yet venture to say that I shall partake of this salvation."

James.—" But if I were to show you your name—yes, your own name—written in the word of life, as one invited to partake of the promises, would you then believe that they belong to you—to yourself ?"

Martin.—" Surely my name is not written in the Bible ? I never saw it there."

James.—" I will show you what I mean. Turn to the First Epistle of St. John, the fifth chapter, and read the first verse."

Martin.—" ' Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.' "

James.—" Observe : it is written ' *whosoever believeth.*' Does not that word include your name, and our names, and the names of any others who believe ? Is there any exception added, which shows that it cannot apply to you ? Tell me why you are not included in that ' whosoever.' The gospel is made known to you, and why should you not believe in this promise ?"

" Can this be true ?" said Martin, clasping his hands together, and looking attentively at James. " Have I a right to receive and to rejoice in what Christ has done ? To suppose that the Son of God suffered for *me !* Can I, a poor sinner, who now speak to you, say, without pride, or assuming to myself what does not belong to me—can I venture to say that the Saviour died upon the cross for *my* sins ? Tell me, sir, tell me : have I really a right to say this, and to feel confident of it ?"

James.—" Answer yourself. What would you do if such a promise were made to you as to the things of this world ? Suppose we were suffering from a famine—you were hungry, and not a morsel of food remained in your house. You wander forth into the village, seeking for something to eat ; but all are as destitute as yourself, and you are growing feebler every minute. Just then you pass near the Minister's house : the door is open, and you see in the hall a large table covered with loaves of the best bread, and above them is a board with this inscription : ' Whosoever is hungry, let him enter, and take as much bread as he needs.' What would you do ? Would you doubt whether this concerned you ? and would you turn back into the village, inquiring of all the people you met whether you really might enter and take what you wanted ? If you acted thus, would it not show that you doubted whether the inscription on the board was true ? would it not be a proof that you did not believe the minister's offer ? Surely you would enter at once, and satisfy your hunger."

Martin.—" Certainly : who would hinder me ? I should have a right to partake, as the minister gave it to ' whosoever' was hungry."

" Well, my friend," added James, " since in such a case you would receive the witness of men, why not

receive the witness of God, which is greater, (1 John v. 9.) and which is now set before you? Your soul is hungry: there is none of the bread of righteousness in your abode, if I may so express myself; there is nothing but poisonous and bitter herbs: your fellow-men also are destitute of the bread of life. But God has been pleased to set forth publicly the table of his grace. It is covered with the Living Bread which came down from heaven; and you may read, in letters which cannot be effaced, the promise which He that cannot lie has written, and whereunto he has set his seal.—Let him that is hungry draw near, and partake of that which is offered unto him freely, without money and without price; let him eat that which is good, the Bread which cometh down from heaven, and is offered for the life of the world. (John vi. 33, 41; Isa. lv. 1, 2; Rev. xxii. 17.) Why then hesitate, my friend? Is it necessary to go and ask the opinion of some other hungry soul whether this promise is true? Or do you suppose that God can have uttered an untruth? Such are your thoughts if you refuse to believe his holy word. (1 John v. 10.) Is it not written, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved?

By these and various other explanations, James set before the invalid more clearly that proclamation of free pardon which God himself declared in the Garden of Eden; which he repeated to the patriarchs, and confirmed to Abraham;—which was veiled beneath the types and observances of the Law, but was fully and plainly set forth in the Gospel;—which was sealed by His precious blood, brought to light by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and proclaimed throughout the earth to all mankind; so that whosoever listens thereto, is authorized to believe therein, to lay fast hold upon it for himself, and to possess the spiritual life contained therein. James then quoted the words of our Lord, 'These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full,' (John xv. 11.) The poor mechanic then exclaimed, "These are indeed glad tidings! they comfort my soul; they take away my fears."

During the whole of this conversation, which passed exactly as it is related, Martin showed much seriousness and attention. He occasionally expressed, by some gesture or slight exclamation, the various impressions which

were made by the instructions he received; but, although he was naturally of a quick and hasty temper, he remained perfectly calm; like a scholar anxious to learn, and desirous fully to understand the explanations of his teacher.

When he began to comprehend that salvation is a free gift, through the grace of God; and his heart was enabled to receive that truth with submission—or rather, when the Lord himself had revealed his love to this sinner, whom he had chosen to deliver from the hard service and bondage of sin, his countenance visibly changed: freedom and calm reliance appeared to take place of that constraint and anxiety which was previously observed in him. Philip remarked this, and told him, that he now appeared more at ease, and as if delivered from a secret burden.

"I am so," said Martin, with a smile: "I do feel different from what I was. I seemed to myself as if enclosed between two walls, and as though they were about to fall upon me. I now feel happy, and I shall always bless God that he sent you to visit me."

Edward.—"Do you really mean that you now feel differently from what you formerly did?'

Martin.—"Yes, sir, very differently; I now see that there is peace for my soul; and that I may cast all my cares upon the Lord; but formerly I tormented myself with vain endeavours to fulfil the law of God in my own strength, and often have I laboured to be my own Saviour."

Edward.—"And do you begin to understand what is meant in the Scripture, when, speaking of the conversion of the sinner, it is called 'a new birth,' 'a resurrection, (John iii.; Eph. ii. 5,) 'passing from darkness into marvellous light?" 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Martin.—"I trust that I do, and I begin to feel a joy in believing, which is quite new to me. I seem as if I had received a very valuable gift."

Philip.—"The gift which God bestows upon the soul which He converts in Christ Jesus, is indeed invaluable; for it is eternal life, the gift of his unchangeable grace—a free and absolute pardon. It is being called to partake of the happiness of those who enjoy the presence of their heavenly Father." 1 John i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 8; Phil. iv. 4.

James then asked some further questions, to ascertain whether they might believe that Martin had actually received salvation in his heart through faith, and not merely in his understanding, by that sort of impression which the truth will naturally make upon the mind of a simple-hearted person.

"Our Lord," said he, "imposed a painful task upon his disciples, when he suffered upon the cross,—that the world should be crucified unto them, and they unto the world; and remember, that 'they which are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.'" Gal. vi. 14; v. 24.

Martin.—"But this obedience ought not to be painful, since it is required by Him who has done so much for them. We are willing to put up with troubles and inconveniences for those who are our benefactors: surely, it must be gratifying to the real follower of Christ to resign every thing for his beloved Saviour."

James.—"Do you feel this desire springing up within your heart; and do you wish to live wholly to Him who died for you?"

Martin.—"Ah, sir, what can I do for my God? He has redeemed me; he gave himself a ransom for me; he has washed me from my sins in his own blood, and at last will receive me into heaven. All this is done by Him; and what can a poor creature like myself do for his glory? I have no connection with the world; I have no learning, no riches, nor any means of being useful: I am quite unknown and forgotten! All that I can desire is, to know more every day of that great love wherewith the Saviour has loved me; and in all things to endeavour to obey his precepts more than I have hitherto done."

It was thus a poor, uninformed mechanic testified, from the beginning of his conversion, that the Lord Jesus Christ was dear to him; and preferred the commandments of God to the desires and possessions of this world.

Philip inquired whether the joy which he felt at having 'found the Messiah' (John i. 41) did not make him wish to impart the same glad tidings to others; and whether he should not rejoice to become, in the hands of God, an instrument of mercy towards other poor sinners, who were still ignorant of the salvation which had been revealed to him?

"I can do but little," said Martin, pointing to his amputated limb. "A poor cripple like me has but little opportunity of conversing with the people of the village But I would trust, if God permits, to be useful to those who come to see me. I thought of this, sir, before you spoke of it; and I intended to ask you what I could do."

James.—"I think your regular occupation in future will be the study of the word of God: it should be found upon your table, from whence false and worldly writings should be excluded. You will easily learn, from those who visit you, whether they read the Bible, and are acquainted with its truths, and understand the glad tidings of salvation which it contains, sets forth, and promises. You can read some passages to them, and converse respecting the meaning, as God may enable you to speak a word in season; but, above all, by constant and earnest prayer, you will seek the direction and the blessing of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, who will teach you the truth, and enable you to impart it to others. Feel an anxious love for those poor souls, who, although called Christians, are perishing in unbelief, and in the false doctrines which they have been taught. Love your neighbours as yourself, and you will soon learn how to speak to them of the love of Christ. You may also offer to lend some tracts to them, which we will procure for you. Interesting narratives, or short exhortations, may attract the attention of those who would refuse to read larger books, or who are prejudiced against the Bible by infidelity and unbelief. I will now leave you some of these silent messengers, which have often been exceedingly powerful in the hand of the Lord."

Martin took some pamphlets from a shelf by the window, and selecting two small tracts, he showed them to the friends, saying, "Here are two of the messengers you speak of: they were given me five or six months ago; and through their contents I was first led to think respecting my soul: they caused me to reflect concerning my salvation with an anxiety which I in vain endeavoured to drive away. They were left with me by the lady who gave me this Bible; and their perusal has frequently afforded me consolation under my sufferings. You may see that they have been read very often."

Philip.—"We have good reason to believe that such

little books will do for others the same good they have done to you; for God has blessed, and will bless, their testimony concerning his beloved Son. You can employ yourself in circulating these little works in your neighbourhood, and in persuading people to read them. You will thus, without stirring from your seat, be an active visitor to all around, and will introduce the glad tidings of salvation into the houses, and I trust also into the hearts, of some of these poor villagers, who, we fear, are yet unacquainted with Christ Jesus as their Saviour and their Lord."

Martin.—"Ah, sirs, it is difficult to form a just idea of the ignorant and ungodly state of the greater part of the people of this village; and I fear that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood are very much the same. I do assure you that I have often thought whether there is not more fear and reverence for God among the Turks, than amongst such Christians as these. It is impossible to be more careless or ignorant of religion; and many of them are 'mockers,' who laugh at the truth."

Edward.—"But do not they go to church on Sundays?"

Martin.—"Why, as to that, they are regular enough, and also at the Communion, and in keeping the fasts and other ceremonies; but what then? As soon as church is over, they go to their markets, and buy and sell—things are cried even at the church-door.* On that holy day the public-houses are full, and all sorts of amusements quickly efface every serious impression."

Edward.—"Have not they the Bible in their houses?"

Martin.—"It has been circulated among them a good deal of late; but I dare not repeat the blasphemies which many to whom it has been given have uttered respecting this holy book. They proceed from real hatred to the Lord Jesus. You may find among some of the best of our villagers, particularly the aged persons, a certain degree of respect for the Supreme Being and his providence; for these are the terms they use; but if you speak of the Saviour, or his precious blood shed upon the cross for our sins, you immediately perceive the smile of unbelief and

* The reader is reminded that this description refers to the Continent; but it is, in several respects, too applicable to many parts of our own country.—*Translator.*

contempt, and you will quickly hear some impious expression of their sentiments."

Edward.—"And do you think this is general?"

Martin.—"As far as I can judge, after having lived three years in this village, there is but little difference as to the people of this part of the country. I do not recollect hearing any thing like a serious conversation during the whole time. All their religion consists in hearing a sermon once a week; and the shorter it is the better they like it: a few of the best among them repeat their prayers, but only as a matter of course."

Edward.—"I hope you are not acquainted with all the people of the village, and that you will find some exceptions which will please you."

Martin.—"Alas, sir, it is painful to witness such things; and the statement I have just made is not a judgment which I wish to pronounce upon the conduct of my fellow-creatures; but you desired to know the state of the neighbourhood, and it is my duty to relate the particulars with which I am acquainted. I would believe that there are two or three whose hearts God has touched; but the greater part are like what I was, before God laid his hand upon me, and chastised me by affliction. In truth, I was as bad as any amongst them, or even worse."

James.—"But now, I trust, you will be their friend, their counsellor, and their guide, to direct them to Him who has pardoned your offences, and who requires from you this work of faith and labour of love for the advancement of his kingdom upon earth."

Martin.—"I have sometimes thought it would be well if Missionaries came to us, as they go to distant countries: for although I was ignorant of the truths which I now begin to perceive, yet I felt that there was need of something more than I had learned. I recollect, about six months ago, I was reading a Missionary Report—for my lameness has long confined me: it made me eager to read all the books which came in my way; and the kind lady I spoke of lent me that, with some others—I was much struck with the account it gave of the conversion of the people of Otaheite. I had read the voyages of Captain Cook; and when I found that the people of that island were converted to Christianity, and that King Pomarea circulated the Bible, I was impressed in a manner I

cannot describe. I wished to relate the delightful history to the people of this house; but they told me they did not care about such things, and that whatever might happen at such a distance could do them neither good nor harm, as they should never be a penny the richer for it. I have thought several times then, and cannot help saying, that we need Missionaries, if possible, more than the people who are in the distant parts of the world. But I have also thought, that they would not be received here so kindly as in Otaheite."

After some further conversation, the three friends returned home, but not until, with their new brother, they had offered up their thanks to God for the mercy he had shown towards Martin, and fervently implored the divine blessing upon the labour of love which they trusted was about to commence in that village.

Early the next morning Philip sent the tracts he promised; and about a fortnight afterwards he received a letter from Martin, which I copy faithfully as follows:—

"29th April, 182ε

Sir,—I take the liberty to write a few lines, to inquire if you are well, and at the same time to inform you, as you desired, of what passes here as to the religion of Christ.

"I ought first to thank you for the valuable present of good and useful books which I received. I have already derived benefit from them; and I have begun to distribute them, according to your wishes.

"The day before yesterday, a woman, who lives at the other end of the village, came to tell me that her daughter, who is supposed to be in a decline, had read two of these little books, and was so pleased with them that she wished to see some others; and I lent her two more.—Another woman told me, that a poor young man, who lodges with her, and who can only live among the cows,* had heard one of the tracts read, and expressed a feeling of pleasure for the first time since he had been at her house.

"These little circumstances encourage me; and I would hope that God will bless this work. I continue to send my little messengers about; and though they may be refused admittance into some places, I hope this

* From an idea that he would receive benefit from the breath of those animals.

will not be the case in general, since they have already, in two instances, been received.

"But before I conclude my letter, I ought to mention the happiness I have enjoyed since the last visit from you and your kind friends. That day was the happiest of my life. Since that time I have even felt better in my health. I have slept better, and have not suffered so much pain. And I ought to state, that I no longer wish to read foolish books. Nor do I now repeat my prayers as a mere matter of course: since that happy day, when you brought to me the glad tidings of grace and salvation in my beloved Saviour Jesus Christ, I have felt an earnest desire to pray from my heart, as God the Holy Spirit teaches me; and, what is quite new to me, when I pray, it seems as if God were near me, and listened to my prayers.

"Sir, I would entreat you, my kind benefactor, not to forget me, and to favour me with a visit shortly: but I no longer have reason to wish that I was at Otaheite, for I have received the same glad tidings of peace which that island has heard.

"I will finish my letter, the length of which I beg you to excuse, by adding a beautiful passage which I lately read in the Prophet Isaiah: it afforded me much comfort: 'Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob my servant, and thou Jesurun, whom I have chosen: for I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and sur name himself by the name of Israel.' Isa. xliv. 2—5.

"May the Lord continue to lead us in this pleasant path of light and true happiness!

"I remain, sir, with sincere respect,

"Your humble servant before God,

"MARTIN ——."

This pleasing letter was read several times by the three friends, and they fixed an early day for revisiting the field of their missionary labours. It was the

9th of the following month. And as these servants of the Lord proceeded on their way, they conversed on the subject which principally occupied their minds, and examined the causes of that coldness which is frequently manifested towards *missions at home*, by many who are full of zeal and activity for sending the Gospel to distant parts of the earth.

"You remind me," said Philip, "of my reflections last year, when present at the large assemblies which are held about this season among 'the nation that fears God,'* in behalf of a multitude of pious enterprises. I attended many of those gratifying meetings; and I heard all that Christian eloquence could express, urging those present, in the most powerful and impressive manner, to exertions for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ in this world. I was benefited, I trust; and frequently I felt ashamed at my own blamable indifference, with regard to the miserable state of the nations where the Gospel is as yet unknown; but I also felt that these *outward* manifestations of Christian charity, and the forcible manner in which the claims and wants of foreign lands were advocated, ought not to deaden those emotions which should constantly arise from beholding the ignorance and impiety which, alas! so awfully prevail amongst the wretched individuals whose miserable abodes are close to the halls where these assemblies are held. This reflection occurred repeatedly to my mind; and one day, in particular, it was so powerful, that, whilst on my way to the meeting of a foreign missionary society, I stopped with an aged mason, who was resting in the street during his dinner-hour. In speaking to him of Christ, I soon found that this aged mason, although called a Christian, and the inhabitant of a Christian land, was almost as ignorant of the Pearl of great price as a native of Greenland or Japan."

Edward.—"Then do you suppose that these meetings and pious labours may lull the soul, and that there is danger, by the abuse of them, of their presenting a nourishment (if I may use the expression) which will

* The reader will remember that this conversation occurred in a foreign country. While we rejoice that the missionary labours of Britain are thus appreciated abroad, we cannot admit that the appellation of 'a nation that fears God,' is applicable to our country.—*Translator.*

prove an opiate to true and living charity? For my own part, I fear this may be the case, and that although real piety has often been promoted by such meetings, yet a hidden snare of indolence may be concealed beneath the bustling activity with which the confession of the Cross of Christ is made before an assembled multitude, and in the midst of a crowd."

Philip.—"I was about to make the same observation. We can easily understand that it is more pleasant to the base indolence of the human heart, to join a thousand others in exclaiming, 'Christ is risen, and we glory in his Cross,' than to stand forth alone, and to make the same declaration in the presence of men, some of whom express contempt and manifest hatred, while others even take up stones to cast at the witness for the truth. The reproach of Christ is a garment closely fitted to our bodies: each of us must wear it for himself; and its colour and shape cause the disciple who is clothed therewith to be recognised in a moment. Surely, then, it is not surprising that so many faint hearts should start back when this garb is presented for them to wear, at the entrance of a house, or in public; and that they should endeavour to quiet their secret remorse, by exclaiming, 'The Cross of Christ, the Cross of Christ!' when in the company of those who willingly admit them to join their ranks, and with pleasure hear them unite in this public declaration, supposing that they only repeat with a louder voice a testimony which they have already made before such of their fellow-citizens as are still lovers of the world."

James.—"This reminds me of the words of a faithful and zealous servant of God, who, in a sermon before a missionary society, remarked, that if it were wished that a mission should be dear to the church, and blessed by the Lord, it must begin in our own hearts. It was a valuable and important expression."

Philip.—"My brethren, there are more difficulties to encounter when establishing a mission in a country *nominally* Christian, than in many heathen lands. The smile of contempt and the insult of hatred are much more painful to the heart, than the menaces of ungodliness or the violence of impious men: it is therefore needful to strengthen ourselves, and steadfastly to

follow the work which the Lord evidently appears to have begun in this corner of the earth. I know not whether I am too sanguine; but I cannot help believing that there is here a 'demonstration of the Spirit and of power' from God; and that we are called to labour in a field which he himself has prepared for us."

The hope expressed by Philip was realized; and this visit showed that the Lord had reserved children for himself, even in a place which at first appeared to be the abode only of spiritual death.

Martin informed the three friends, that he had distributed most of the religious tracts, and that they had already caused some stir in the village. "Some were torn," said he, "it is true; but the greater part have been read, and more than one conscience has been roused. If I saw you again, I was desired to ask you to be so kind as to visit the persons I mentioned in my letter. At the same time I have to say, that your coming here does not please every body—some children, who had got your little books, have been obliged to give them up, or to burn them."

Philip.—"When we hear the wind blow, we may be sure there is air to breathe. Perhaps this is the way which the Lord has appointed to induce them to read some portion of the word of God; and I should not be surprised if, before long, they recommend the very tracts which they now speak against. Were we not thus taken ourselves? and is not the Lord able to do the same with them?"

Happy are they who thus contemplate only the power of God! who consider human means, and their best endeavours, only as leaves of paper upon which a promise has been copied. Would a promise be less powerful if it had been inscribed upon another leaf; or if it had been written upon wood, or even upon the ground? The terms in which the promise is given constitute its authority. When we are acquainted with the particulars, and are satisfied as to the intention of Him by whom it has been given; of what consequence is it, if the frail materials upon which it has been copied are destroyed, provided the *words* of the promise are sufficiently known, and that those who at first rejected or disdained the terms are satisfied of the truth and the intentions of Him who gave it?

The three friends were convinced of this, they offered themselves for the work before them, only as servants to execute an order, with the extent of which they were not fully acquainted, while the authority and character of their Master sufficiently guaranteed its justice and utility.

The village is divided into two parts, separated by some fields; in the midst of which, at a place where four ways meet, is the church and churchyard. Near the entrance of that silent abode, upon a stone, which served as a buttress to the wall, sat an aged pedlar: his pack was at his side, and he was counting money into his hat

"Have you done well to-day, my friend?" said Philip.

"No," said the pedlar; "I get on as badly as man must do who has neither strength nor credit."

"In what respect are you poor?" replied Philip "do you speak of your soul or your body?"

The pedlar looked up, and, regarding the friends with some surprise, said, "Why, as to that, master, I believe I am poor enough in both."

Philip.—"That is sad: but would you rather be rich as to your body or your soul?"

The pedlar put his money into his little leather purse, and replied with seriousness, "I should prefer the wealth of the soul to any earthly possession."

Philip.—"Why should you prefer it?"

The Old Man.—"Because the soul will last longer than the body;—*that* will perish, while the other will endure for ever."

Philip.—"Then you would be glad, if I could point out where you might obtain eternal riches for your soul without delay?"

Old Man.—"Can you do so, sir?"

Philip.—"I think I can. If I put into your hands the treasure of your salvation, shall not I have procured great riches for you?"

Old Man.—"My salvation is no trifling matter; it requires the labour of my whole life to procure it; and I can only receive it from God, not from a man."

Philip.—"I hope then that you possess it; for God gave this gift long ago, and without price."

Old Man.—"Sir, I am not an inhabitant of this village: I am a Roman Catholic; and I travel about to sell my wares."

James.—"But, my good man, though you are a Roman Catholic, you have a soul; and you wish to be saved from the wrath to come."

Old Man.—"Certainly, sir; and I take more pains about it than perhaps you would suppose."

Philip.—"What do you do to obtain it? Do you think your task will soon be finished?"

Old Man.—"Who can venture to say that his task is ended, while he lives? and I must confess, I am not better than others."

Philip.—"Do not you then rejoice that the Lord Jesus Christ died for sinners, and has obtained by his cross and sufferings, that salvation which all your painful endeavours and sacrifices cannot purchase? Ought we not to rejoice that God *so* loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life?"

Old Man.—"Yes, sir, it was wonderful love; but we must do a great deal before we can partake of it?"

Philip.—"Surely you do not mean that you would perform what the Son of God has performed: I mean you do not suppose that you are to be condemned and crucified as he was, and that you must offer to God the *same sacrifice* which Jesus offered for us poor sinners?"

Old Man.—"No, assuredly not: this sacrifice could only be offered by the Son of God taking our nature upon him for us."

Philip.—"Do you know why this bleeding sacrifice was offered upon the cross?"

Old Man.—"Christ redeemed us from our sins by offering himself as a sacrifice for us."

Philip.—"Therefore you should understand, if you reflect seriously, and as an aged man ought to reflect when his everlasting happiness is concerned, that since Christ has redeemed us by the sacrifice of himself, and since he has thus cleansed us from our sins, it cannot be required of us to do this again, as if the Son of God had not been able to accomplish it."

Old Man.—"But, sir, during our whole lives we should do penance for our sins, and endeavour to blot them out by our good works."

Philip.—"Rather say, that we ought sincerely to repent of our sins, by which we have offended such a mer-

ciful God and Saviour; and that we ought boldly and watchfully, in dependence upon his grace, to oppose what is wrong, and closely to follow after what is right."

Old Man.—"Yes, that is what I meant; and am not I right?"

Philip.—"You are right, if you mean that we ought to be grieved for causing sorrow to a Benefactor, and that we ought earnestly to endeavour to do what is pleasing to him. But surely you can perceive that this desire to please him is not the reason *why* the benefit has been bestowed; but it is the natural consequence and effect of kindness upon a heart desirous to show its gratitude and love."

Old Man.—"Then you mean, sir, that we ought to do good works, not to procure the pardon of our sins, since the Son of God has already obtained this, but to show our love and gratitude to him?"

Philip.—"And does this truth—for it is the truth—appear to you opposed to the mercy or the holiness of God?"

Old Man.—"It appears to me the truth, and is very consoling to the heart; but I never understood it in this manner. I will think about it. It is a very important subject; and an error in this respect must be of more consequence than any other."

Philip.—"Well, my friend, I wish you to think about it. No doubt you can read. Accept this little book: you will find it states more fully the truths I have just mentioned, and also some further particulars respecting the perfect salvation which the Son of God purchased for us, and which he enables us to possess by the faith which he produces in our hearts by his word of life and his Holy Spirit. You will also learn how the Christian, being thus reconciled to God through the blood of Christ, finds peace for his soul, and seeks to 'live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' (Tit. ii. 12—14.) Yes, he looks forward to meet that glorious Saviour, whom, having not yet seen, he loves, and to whose service he willingly and heartily

surrenders himself, from gratitude, not from servile fear, nor the constraint which proceeds from the dread of punishment. Accept this little book, and read it with attention, entreating God to bless it to your soul, and that it may show to you his well-beloved Son our unchangeable Saviour."

The old man took the tract, and thanked the friends with a strong expression of grateful feeling. They then left him; and presently, looking back at a turn in the road, they saw him sitting in the same place, and that he had already begun to read. The three followers of Christ implored the Divine blessing upon what had passed; and their heavenly Father heard and granted the prayer which the Spirit of His Son caused the hearts of His children to offer.

"Our mission has been gratifying," said Edward; 'and the Lord has encouraged us; for I can hardly describe how much I have been interested with the conversation of this old man. Did you observe the serious manner in which he replied to the questions which we asked concerning his soul? I would hope that he has received the glad tidings, and that the seed of the word of life has already taken root in good ground."

James.—"I could not help remarking that he was a Roman Catholic; and it is not the first time I have observed more of a pious disposition in persons of that communion, who have received some degree of instruction, than is manifested by many of the unbelieving Protestants. The latter are ungodly scorners, and deny all that relates to God; while the former at least listen with respect, when spoken to concerning salvation and the sufferings of the Saviour."

Philip.—"But surely you do not, therefore, suppose that the doctrines of the Romish Church are more conformable to the Gospel than those of Protestantism?"

James.—"Certainly not; and we are perfectly agreed as to the Romish Church, that it is at least equally opposed to the truth as it is in Jesus, as any other body of unbelievers who do not depend solely on the free mercy of the Father in His well-beloved Son. No one can have a greater dread and abhorrence than myself, of the abominations and wicked falsehoods by which 'the Man of Sin' (as this apostate church is denominated in Scripture,

2 Thess. ii.) opposes the faith of the children of God. I meant to say, that of two men, both unregenerate, if one had been brought up in the Romish heresy, and the other in those heresies which deny the Divinity of our blessed Saviour, or despise him; I would venture to say humanly speaking, that the former would be much more ready to listen to the truths concerning the sacrifice of Christ than the latter. And if I were a missionary, I should hope to be more useful among Roman Catholics, even though bigoted to their faith, than if called to labour among those who had learned to despise the atonement of Christ, and to assert that he was only a man. Nay, even the Turks are not more opposed to the belief in Jesus than those awful unbelievers, who not only deny his suffering and the work of the Holy Spirit, but also, by utterly denying the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, they treat *the whole* of the truths of the Gospel as cunningly devised fables."

Edward.—"May it please God that we meet with souls to-day which are simple-hearted, and willing to be instructed in the truth! There is one of the houses which Martin requested us to visit, and some one appears coming to meet us."

"Gentlemen, you are welcome," said an aged female, whom the friends recognised as the woman that opposed her companions who ridiculed the tracts as they returned from market. "You are the gentlemen Martin told us about?"

Philip.—"He asked us to come to see you, and we trust that God has directed us hither."

They entered a small room: it was poorly furnished, but every thing was neat and in order. As soon as they were seated, the old woman resumed her spinning, and at once directed the conversation to serious subjects, by saying, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?" Luke xviii. 8.

The friends inquired how she had been able to walk in the ways of religion, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

"I am sorry to say there is not much religion in my heart," answered she; "but, for the little I possess, I consider, that, next to God, I am indebted to the worthy pastor who taught me in my youth. It was not in this

village, nor indeed in this country. I lived with my parents among the mountains; and the town where we dwelt was favoured with the ministry of a real servant of God: he taught me what little I know of the truth; it was from the holy Scriptures; for he caused us to learn passages by heart, and always referred to the Bible when he catechised us. They do quite differently here; and I find it very difficult to teach my children and grandchildren: any thing is easier, than to get them to read or listen to the word of God."

Edward.—"But Martin told us, that one of your daughters, who is unwell, had read several tracts, which had fallen into her hands, with much pleasure."

The Woman.—"Yes; it is my poor Fanny: God himself, in his mercy, sent us those good books; for before she read them, she had no peace in her soul, neither day nor night; but since she became acquainted with them, and I may say has studied them over and over again, she is become as happy and quiet as a lamb. May the Lord do the same for the rest of the family!"

The friends inquired if they could speak to Fanny: and the mother with much pleasure showed them into the next room. They found a young woman of a pleasing appearance, but evidently in a weak state of health. "These are the gentlemen who sent the tracts," said the mother: "I know you will be very glad to speak with them, you have often wished to do so."

"Yes, gentlemen," said Fanny, modestly; "I have often wished to see you, that I might thank you for the good which your books have done to my soul. You find me happy in my mind; but I was not so, till I had received your little books."

Philip.—"Then the reading of these books has been the means of imparting peace to your soul?"

Fanny.—"More than I can describe. I have long been very ill; and know that I have only a short time to live. I was uneasy about my sins; but now I am persuaded that God has pardoned me in Christ Jesus, his well-beloved Son."

James.—"Was the reading of these tracts the only means by which you obtained that peace which God now enables you to enjoy?"

Fanny.—"I will tell you, sir. I was careless as to my

salvation till last year. At the beginning of the winter my illness increased, and I began to have some fears about death and hell. In the month of January a minister from ———— preached here one Sunday: his subject was the Day of Judgment, and the sufferings of the wicked. In the evening I heard some friends converse about the sermon; and my mother took the Bible and read the description of the Day of Judgment given by St. Matthew. After that evening I felt very unhappy: I thought a great deal about the salvation of my soul; and I was a long time without finding any comfort. One day a little book was brought home by one of our family, which he found in the road as he returned from the city: it was the history of a woman of La Valais, who at a very advanced age was converted by the word of the Gospel. I read the tract ten or twelve times; and it gave me a hope of pardon which I had not possessed before. Not long ago, Martin sent us some of the tracts you left with him; and I think that I have received much good from reading them."

James.—"Did you not like to read the Bible before your illness?"

Fanny.—"I read in it a good deal; but I have only understood something of its contents, and read it with real pleasure for a short time. It now seems as if God himself spoke to me. I used to consider it as a history, and not as a conversation between God and my heart. It is now my daily bread; and I love it more and more every day."

James.—"Do you feel quite easy and without alarm as to the life to come?"

Fanny.—"Since you ask me this important question, I must say that one thing troubles me; and that is a fear of losing the great Salvation which my Saviour obtained for me at the price of his sufferings."

James.—"Why should you fear being separated from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" Rom. viii. 39.

Fanny.—"We are so weak—at least I am so very weak—and there are so many temptations to which even a poor sick person like myself is exposed."

James.—"Then it will be a great comfort for you to learn, from the Word of God, that, as St. Peter declares,

believers in Christ are 'kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation;' which means, that they shall certainly possess the salvation which is 'ready to be revealed in the last time;' and the Apostle adds, 'Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.'" 1 Pet. i. 5—7.

Fanny.—"This is indeed a sweet promise; but does not the same Apostle speak, in another place, of those who, after having escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are again entangled therein and overcome?"

James.—"Yes; he is speaking of the unrighteous, the cursed children, who, having forsaken the right path, are gone astray, loving the wages of unrighteousness, and becoming the servants of corruption. He does not then speak of the children of God, but on the contrary, he declares, that 'the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.'" 2 Pet. ii.

Fanny.—"But the roaring lion, that goeth about seeking whom he may devour!——" 1 Pet. v. 8.

James.—"He will not be able to pluck a single sheep out of the hand of the good Shepherd. Our Lord himself has declared this." John x. 28—30.

Fanny.—"Then I have been wrong to fear lest Christ should forsake me."

James.—"You have been more foolish than a little child who should fear that an affectionate mother would cast it to a savage beast; for our Merciful God and Father assures us, that, even if it were possible that a mother should forget her infant, yet He will not forget his people, nor turn away his heart from them, which was set upon them to do them good." Isa. xlix. 15; lv. 3; Jer. xxiv. 5—7; xxxi. 31—36.

Fanny.—"It is true, my faith has been very feeble, and I much need to be strengthened in my belief of the faithfulness of God to his promises. You have pointed out to me a sure ground of consolation. Then

I may fully rely on his word that I shall see God. This indeed gives victory over the world, and over the troubles, temptations, and weaknesses of our nature.

James.—"The promises of God respecting this are very numerous, but especially remember the following:—First, the prayer addressed by our blessed Lord to his heavenly Father; 'Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are;' and we know that the Father always hears his beloved Son. (John xvii. 11; see xi. 42.) Also, remember what St. Paul says, when writing to the Christians at Corinth; 'God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;' and that He would confirm them unto the end, that they might be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in another place, 'Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.' He wrote to the Philippians that he was 'confident of this very thing,' that 'He which had begun a good work in them would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.' To the Thessalonians he declared, 'Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it;' and, 'the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.' The Apostle Jude ascribes 'Glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, to the only wise God our Saviour, who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.' With the same confidence David says, 'Though I walk in the midst of trouble thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.'" 1 Cor. i. 9, 8; 2 Cor. i. 21; Phil. i. 6; 1 Thess. v. 24; 2 Thess. iii. 3; Jude 24, 25; Ps. cxxxviii. 8.

How pleasing the employment which the Lord assigns to his children, to visit and console and strengthen a soul faithful, but weak, because it has not yet dared steadfastly to contemplate the transcendent glory of the mercy of God! How great a favour is the unspeakable gift of that word of truth, of love, and faithfulness, of power and victory, when it dwells thus abundantly in the child of

God, and, according to the wants of those who listen thereto, it opens the rich treasure of the promises of 'God, that cannot lie!' (Tit. i. 2.) He assuredly will perform to his people all the good pleasure of his will, by enriching them with the fulness of his grace and his blessedness for ever. Happy is the man that searches the Scriptures; whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who has hid it in his heart! Ps. i. 2; cxix. 11.

Fanny's mother seemed pleased with the conversation just related. Philip told her that she was known to his friends and himself, and reminded her of what passed on the road, as already mentioned. "Ah," said she, "that was but trifling, compared with what those unhappy unbelievers said afterwards. I really think they would take pleasure in wounding, or even slaying, those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. They utter all kinds of blasphemy and ungodliness, if they hear any one attempt to express a word respecting salvation. It is of such wretched creatures as these the Bible speaks, when it says, 'Their throat is an open sepulchre; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: there is no fear of God before their eyes.'" Rom. iii. 13, 14, 18.

Philip.—"What religion do they profess? Do they deny that there is a God?"

The Woman.—"Most of these wretched persons were born and brought up during the time of the Revolution,* when ungodliness reigned in the hearts of all people, and the children imbibed the evil principles of their parents I do not think you could find many that read a chapter in the Bible once a year; and I fear there is not one who thinks about his soul. They say that God does not trouble himself about our doings; and if there is a life to come, we shall know what it is when we get there!"

Edward.—"But they have been taught some things?—they know how to read and write; they do not want understanding, so that they must be able to think and consider what is told them respecting the righteousness of God, and the evil of their state by nature."

The Woman.—"Sir, I fear it would be better for them to be ignorant—nay, I had almost said, to be fools or

* The reader is again reminded, that the circumstances recorded in this narrative occurred on the Continent.

idiots—rather than possess that knowledge of which they make such a bad use. I am sure it would be easier to teach poor Gaspard the truths of religion than these people, who possess a better understanding, and who pretend to know all that is needful."

Philip.—"Who is poor Gaspard?"

The Woman.—"He is a poor young man who lodges at the next house. Some persons think him not much better than an idiot, and he is very ill. It is, indeed, painful to look at him."

"We will go and see him," said James. "The Lord has mercy for all his creatures; and He that made the understanding of man can enable even this poor lad to understand the love of the Saviour. Will you show us where he is?"

Fanny.—"For the last two years he has lived in the stable, for the breath of the cows; and you will see that, outwardly, there appears little difference between the condition of this poor lad and that of the animals around him."

The friends took leave of Fanny. Philip engaged to send her a selection of Scripture promises; and these messengers of peace went to see Gaspard.

"The gate of the first habitation of the Messiah," said James, as he stooped to enter the stable, "was not higher or more splendid than this. He who lay in a manger amidst cattle, surely will not disdain to dwell with a child of man who lives amongst them. May the blessed Spirit be present with us, and direct us what to say!"

Edward and Philip added "Amen." Their conductress returned home, and they shut the stable-door.

At the further end, near a window, or rather an opening in the wall without frame or glass, a tall young man, about twenty years of age, lay reclining against the frame of a wretched bedstead. His head was bent forward upon his breast, and his hands were clasped together upon his body, which was swollen in an extraordinary manner, painful to behold. The friends paused, for they could not look at him without emotion.

"He is one of our brethren," said Edward: "he is a child of Adam; but he appears truly miserable! May God be pleased to speak peace and comfort to his soul!"

'You seem to suffer a good deal of pain, continued he, approaching Gaspard; "and I fear you are unhappy."

The young man replied, in a melancholy tone, without raising his head, or looking at the person who spoke "I am in darkness, and it is so wearisome!"

Edward.—"Have you been ill a long time?"

Gaspard.—"All my life: God made me as I am—I did not make myself."

Edward was deeply moved at this expression, and with difficulty replied, "But God is love: He is very merciful."

"So people tell me," said Gaspard.

Edward.—"It is the truth; for your sufferings, which are great, will soon be ended, and a life of joy and peace in heaven is offered you."

"Who told you so?" said Gaspard, raising his head and looking steadfastly at Edward.

Edward.—"God says so in his word. Did you never read the Bible?"

Gaspard.—"I lent mine to my sister, and I do not recollect much of it."

Edward.—"What books are those upon the shelf?"

Gaspard.—"They are some books which a person lent me; but I find no pleasure in reading them I do not care about reading books of travels."

Edward.—"My poor friend, what would you like to read?"

Gaspard.—"Fanny lent me a little book about a man who was saved by Christ. It made me weep—I feel very sad!"

Edward.—"Then you know who the Lord Jesus Christ is?"

Gaspard.—"I believe that he is the Friend of the unhappy, and I wish he were mine; but I do not know where to find him, and that makes me weep."

The three friends wept also. James offered up a silent prayer; Philip hastily wrote down a memorandum of what passed; while Edward was scarcely able to continue the conversation, but his words came from his heart.

Edward.—"Then you would rejoice to find this good Saviour, my dear Gaspard, and to feel that he loved you?"

Gaspard.—" Nobody but you calls me dear Gaspard. Do you love me ?"

Edward, (taking his hand.)—" I trust I do, and I shall be happy indeed if I can comfort you."

Gaspard turned away his head, saying, " Somehow I feel very strangely.'

Edward.—" But you can listen to what I am about to speak respecting the love of Christ."

Gaspard.—" I like to hear his name better than my mother's."

Edward.—" He loves you more than any mother ever loved her child. Gaspard, He gave his life for you, and shed his blood to save your soul !"

Gaspard.—" Will you write that upon a bit of paper ? should like to read it after you are gone."

Edward.—" I will write it down ; but believe it—receive it in your heart."

Gaspard.—" I should have believed it before now, if I had been better ; but I dare not believe it, for I am wicked, and God is angry with me."

Edward.—" Who told you that God is angry with you ?"

Gaspard.—" All the people of the village. One day I went to church, and the children hooted after me, saying that I was accursed. I returned home weeping, and I now feel very sad !"

Edward.—" But you do not murmur against God ?"

Gaspard.—" God is too holy for a wretched creature like me to murmur against him."

Edward.—" Do you believe that your soul justly deserves his wrath ?"

Gaspard.—" I have disobeyed him, and therefore he may justly condemn me. He will do what is just concerning me—I feel very sad !"

Edward.—" But, Gaspard, you said you believed that God gave his well-beloved Son for us, and that this dear Saviour sacrificed his life to redeem our souls from condemnation ?"

Gaspard.—" Yes, I have believed this during the last year—a lady came, and she talked with me and told me so."

Edward.—" Why are you so sad, if you believe that God has redeemed you from your sins."

Gaspard.—" I should not be sad if God had pardoned me ; but I am sad because he has not yet forgiven me."

Edward.—"But you do not expect that God should send his Son upon earth again?"

Gaspard.—"I believe that he will come a second time, at the end of the world; and that the wicked shall then be cast into hell. Oh, that will be very sad!"

Edward.—"But how great will be the joy of those who have believed in Jesus Christ, and have received him as their Saviour and their friend!"

Gaspard.—"And who would not be ready to receive him? Ah, I wish that he would say so to me! I have long desired it."

Edward.—"You would have done better to believe what God has said of him; you would then have received the peace which you desire."

Gaspard.—"Tell me what God has said of Christ, that I may believe it, and be no longer sad."

Edward.—"God has said that he hath given to us eternal life, and that this life is in his Son." 1 John v. 11.

Gaspard.—"Then I believe it, since God says so; for God cannot lie. What he says must be true, it is always true, and therefore I believe it."

Edward.—"As you believe that God has given us eternal life in his Son Jesus Christ, believe that you have that life in Jesus."

Gaspard.—"I do not understand what is having life in Jesus."

Edward.—"Suppose you were afraid of asking a person for a book you wished to read, and he had given this book to his son that you might obtain it from him: if you asked his son for it, you would receive the book by his son, and from that son; and you would thank the person by his son, who gave you the book from him."

Gaspard looked at Edward with much surprise: his countenance changed, and he remained for some time without moving; his mouth open, and one hand lifted up. Edward looked steadfastly at him, and waited till he spoke. "I am not sad now!" said he quietly, but with satisfaction, after pausing some time: "I believe that I have life by the Son of God."

Edward shed tears, and was unable to pursue the conversation.

James then drew near and said, "Gaspard, supposing

you were to die this night, what would become of your soul?"

Gaspard turned to the window, and looked towards heaven, as if he had expected to behold something; he then turned again and sighed.

James repeated the question in a kind and gentle manner, and entreated him to say just what he thought.

Gaspard.—"Heaven is the abode of God, whom we cannot see: his Son Jesus is there, and I believe he loves me.—That is all I believe on the subject."

James.—"How do you know that Jesus loves you?"

Gaspard.—"He must love me, if he came down from heaven to give me eternal life. I am happy now! I am no more sad! God is my friend! I am no longer afraid of him, for he is the Father of the Lord Jesus.—That is what I believe."

James.—"And you are right in believing this, for this is the eternal truth of God. That merciful Father who takes away your sadness, and has sent this light and comfort to your soul, will never leave you, and his Holy Spirit will comfort you in your affliction."

Gaspard.—"I am not sad now! I seem to have received something so good in my heart, it has cured me—I shall be content now!"

James.—"Yes, my friend, my brother in Jesus *our* Saviour, I trust you will be content during the rest of your life; for your Saviour himself will support and comfort you."

Gaspard.—"He has comforted me. Why will you not believe me? I told you I am not sad now."

Edward.—"Dear Gaspard, can you be happy in this stable, and under all your sufferings?"

Gaspard.—"Why should I be unhappy, since I believe that God loves me!"

The friends were unwilling to fatigue this interesting sufferer. They felt deeply astonished and affected by what they had witnessed, and took leave of Gaspard, after giving him a token of their affection. Edward also gave him his own New Testament, saying, "My good friend, here is the book of life and peace: read it continually; and may the Holy Spirit implant in your heart the truths it contains."

Gaspard took the book: he opened it immediately;

and began to read. The friends left him in this holy employment; and as they returned to Martin's abode, they exclaimed, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33.

Martin rejoiced at the account which the friends gave of what had passed. "I know the old pedlar," said he, "and believe him to be an honest man.—Dear Fanny! she will not now have to write to me that she needs encouragement.—But poor Gaspard! that appears a miracle. Gaspard converted, and a believer in Christ! It is wonderful. That poor fellow, the sport of all the idle lads in the village—who could not show himself without causing laughter or pity; is he now in the light of life, and a disciple of Christ? This is indeed a lesson for those who are wise in their own conceit. People will hardly believe it.—Did you desire him to come to me?"

Edward.—"We led him to Jesus by the word of God; and we left him with his Saviour, who will speak to him by his Gospel. You can write to him that you are his brother, and the Spirit of God will dwell amongst you."

"Martin," added James, laying his hand upon the Bible, "remember this is the word that opens the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf, and gives knowledge to those who need understanding. It gives peace to the fearful, and joy to those who are troubled in soul. It is the word of life—it raises the dead; and this word is open before you, that you may read and publish it around. Watch over this precious treasure. Hide not your candle under the bushel of indolence or fear. We beseech you, in the name of our Lord Jesus, be not afraid to publish the truth, and to bear your testimony to the grace which has been manifested towards you."

"This is the more necessary," said Philip, "for we probably may not return here for a considerable time. Other villages require that the seed of the word should be scattered in them; and it will be well to allow the anger and rage which our visits have excited to pass away. As we came down the street, we saw several persons who were ready to insult us; and since Jesus, our Divine Master, remained in Galilee while Archelaus reigned in Judea, and withdrew with his disciples to the sea

when his life was threatened, (Matt. ii. 22; Mark iii. 6 7,) we will wait till He tells us to return hither. His work is in his own hands; he needs not our help, nor the help of other poor sinners like ourselves; and if he commits any talent to your charge, remember,—strengthen yourself in him, and remain faithful, for he will one day require an account of it."

In fact, it was time that those whom the world hated for the name of Jesus, (Matt. x. 22,) should retire from the midst of their Master's enemies. The anger and rage of the bigoted opposers of the truth was already excited, and they had consulted at the public-house as to the most effectual method of preventing these "disturbers of the peace," as they called the three friends, from returning "to trouble their families with their fanatical ideas and *new religion!*" They found many ways of annoying Martin, and took away poor Gaspard's Testament; but God preserved the truth in his heart.

"If the wicked rolleth a stone, it will return upon him," (Prov. xxvi. 27,) and this persecution excited the attention of some other souls, who, like Fanny and Gaspard, felt their need of consolation and peace, which neither the discourses of mere moralists nor the blasphemies of drunkards could bestow. These individuals procured a supply of the religious tracts which kindled this fire; (Luke, xii. 49;) they read them among themselves, and lent them to others: they visited Martin and Fanny, secretly at first, then more openly; and some time after this third visit of the *friends of missions*, another servant of Christ, who went to the village to visit his brethren, found fifteen persons assembled to meet him, to whom he spoke concerning the word, and with whom he prayed. They met at the house where Fanny's mother lived. Poor Gaspard was able to attend, and received a Bible, which the messenger of glad tidings had brought for him.

The Lord hath done this.—The narrative has been given *as faithfully as possible*, in relating what passed in conversation, and detailing a brief account of events as they occurred. One of the three friends lately received some letters from Martin, which show that this plant of faith in Christ has not been rooted up, (Matt. xv. 13,) and that, although it is to be hoped it will become stronger as it continues to grow, yet it already bears

fruit to the glory of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ The following extracts are faithfully transcribed from these letters.—

"December 10, 1825.

"If I desire to celebrate the days which recall to us the events of the life of our Lord and Saviour, it is not that I value them, as days, beyond any other day; but it appears to me, that these seasons are dear to every truly Christian soul, and that we ought to recall the memory of those events, because they were a series of benefits procured for us by the Divine mercy to poor sinners, who, being born in corruption, could not by any other means be freed from the bondage of sin." * * * *

"As to the one thing needful, I suppose it is to be understood as being salvation through faith, and not salvation by works; and that we should lay aside the filthy rags of our own righteousness, and cover ourselves with the robe of our Saviour's righteousness; which we should look to as our refuge, to hide our nakedness, and consequently our spiritual wretchedness. From this it is clear, that the one thing needful, which we should earnestly seek to attain, is to go to Jesus, and rest upon him as the Rock of Ages. With this view, we ought earnestly to entreat God, by fervent prayer, to confirm our faith, which is his gift, and the real strength of the religion of Christ."

In another letter, dated February 1826, Martin rejoices in possessing eternal salvation, and speaks particularly of the watchfulness with which a child of God should endeavour to keep the commandments and precepts of his Lord. He also expresses his sorrow at beholding the unbelief and depravity of those whom the Saviour without ceasing invites to him, that they should have everlasting life.

The friends propose, if it please God, again to visit this *station at home;* and if they were to relate all that God has done in other places in the neighbourhood of their city, they would have to write large volumes.

You, who really desire to see the increase of the kingdom of Christ, is not this simple narrative sufficient to draw your sincere and charitable attention towards the

souls which surround you on every side, and are close to your dwellings? Will you draw a line of distinction between their souls and the souls of others; or will you neglect them, that you may assist others who are further removed from your influence?—Christians, beware of this!—Children of God, I address myself to you, who possess eternal life, and call God your Father! Examine your hearts; search them faithfully; and see whether even that zeal which you manifest for the Martins, the Fannys, and the Gaspards *of distant lands*, is not *sometimes* a plea to cover and excuse the indifference with which you hear of the irreligion that desolates the country *in which you reside*, and where you contribute to those works of charity for other lands. Do not hesitate to examine into the secret motives of your actions; and render them more powerful, by rendering them more pure.

My brethren, I trust you will not mistake what I have said. With you, I rejoice to behold that the everlasting Gospel is carried by the Angel of God throughout all the nations under heaven, and proclaimed in every tongue. With you, I exclaim, "Thy kingdom come!"—"yea, Lord Jesus come quickly!" With you, I feel a holy emulation—I had almost said I envy the happiness of those blessed messengers of peace who render up their spirits to their Saviour in the midst of their labours, and who refrain not from publishing the offers of grace and mercy until they are called to resign their mortal breath. But, at the same time, I look around; I see the hovel of a Martin—and behold the stable of a poor Gaspard—I listen, and hear the sorrowful cry, "I am very sad!" I open my heart, and I hasten towards their wretched abodes!

C M.

Ye messengers, ye heralds of your King!
Lift up the voice, salvation to proclaim;
Be this your hope, be this your glorious aim,
To rescue those around you perishing;
To Christ—to his dear feet, the wanderer brin

See all around the whiten'd harvest rise,
But, lo, the ready reapers are but few;
Ah! let us now our pious zeal renew,
Then as we gaze around in sweet surprise,
Rich sheaves for Christ shall bless the Church's eyes

How beauteous on the mountains are thy feet,
O Child of Peace! O faithful Man of GOD!
Blest is the savage place which thou hast trod:
There shall thine eyes a thousand beauties meet
And CHRIST's disciple in the convert greet.

Burning with heavenly love, this child of light,
Mighty in faith, despising keenest woes,
The baneful rooted error doth oppose,
And lifting up the holy banner bright,
Through CHRIST each idol falls, and sinks in night.

O pious conflict! sacred touching war!
What captives bow before the SAVIOUR's yoke!
JESUS the spell of worldly power hath broke;
O'er every land he rolls his Victor's car;
In CHRIST the Father's glory shines afar.

These blissful tidings, O thou GOD of love,
Within our hearts have found a willing place
And we have tasted that celestial grace
Which with delight the happy spirits prove,
And CHRIST prepares for saints in realms above.

Thy powerful arm asunder snaps the chains
Which bound our souls, of sin the wretched slaves
And from a tainting world thy pity saves,
While heavenly peace supplants our bosom's pains,
The peace of CHRIST, unknown but where He reigns.

The HOLY ONE OF GOD shall be ador'd,
And every soul ere long his laws obey;
His saints by faith pursue his holy way:
Then let us hasten, leaning on his word,
And with new vigour honour CHRIST THE LORD.

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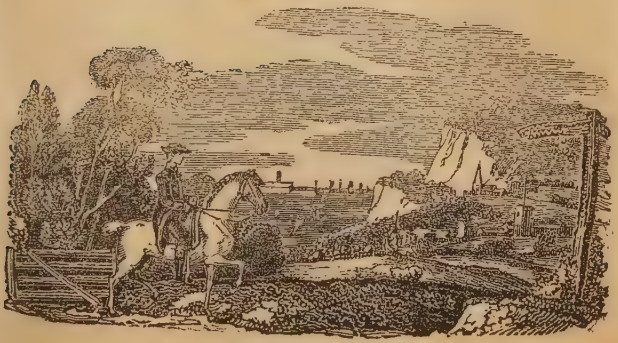
No. 174.

THE

VILLAGE IN THE MOUNTAINS.



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THE

VILLAGE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

M. ——, a merchant at the head of one of the first commercial houses in Paris, had lately occasion to visit the manufactories established in the mountainous tracts of the departments of the Loire and the Puy de Dôme. The road that conducted him back to Lyons traversed a country rich in natural productions, and glowing with all the charms of an advanced and promising spring. The nearer view was unusually diversified; not only by the fantastic forms of mountains, the uncertain course of small and tributary streams, and the varying hues of fields of pasture, corn, vines, and vegetables; but by the combinations and contrasts of nature and of art, and the occupations of rural and commercial industry. Factories and furnaces were seen rising amidst barns and sheep-cotes; peasants were digging, and ploughs gliding amidst forges and founderies; verdant slopes and graceful clumps of trees were scattered amidst the black and ugly mouths of exhausted coal-pits, and the gentle murmur of the stream was subdued by the loud rattle of the loom. Sometimes M. —— and his friend halted amidst all that is delightful and soothing; and after a short advance found themselves amidst barrenness, deformity, and confusion. The remoter scenery was not less impressive. Behind them were the rugged mountains of Puy de Dôme, the lofty Tavare lifted its majestic head beside them, and far before appeared the brilliant summit of Mont Blanc.

In this state of mind he arrived at the skirts of a hamlet, placed on the declivity of a mountain; and being desirous of finding a shorter and more retired track, he stopped at a little house to inquire the way. From the windows several females were watching the movement of a little child; and just as M. —— inquired for a road across the mountains,

the infant was in danger of being crushed by a coal cart which had entered the street. The cries and alarms of the females were met by the activity of the travellers, and the companion of M. —— set off to snatch the infant from danger, and place him in security. An elderly female from the second story gave M ——, who was still on his horse, the directions he desired; and, at the same time, expressed her uneasiness that the gentleman should have had the trouble to seek the child. "Madam," interrupted M. ——, "my friend is only performing his duty: we ought to do to another as we would that another should do to us; and, in this wretched world, we are bound to assist each other. You are kind enough to direct us travellers in the right road, and surely the least we can do is to rescue your child from danger. The holy scriptures teach us these duties, and the gospel presents us the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were in ignorance and danger, came to our world to seek and to save that which was lost." "Ah! sir," replied the good woman, "you are very condescending, and what you say is very true; but your language surprises me; it is so many years since in this village we have heard such truths, and especially from the lips of a stranger." "Madam," resumed M. ——, "we are all strangers here, and sojourners bound to eternity; there is but one road, one guide, one Saviour, who can conduct us safely; if we feel this, young or old, rich or poor, we are all one in Christ; and, however scattered on earth, shall all arrive at the heavenly city, to which he is gone to prepare mansions for us." "These doctrines, sir," exclaimed the female, "support the hearts of many of us, who have scarcely travelled beyond our own neighbourhood; and it is so rare and so delightful to hear them from others, that if it will not be an abuse of your christian politeness, I would request you to alight and visit my humble apartment." "I shall comply most cheerfully with your request," replied M. ——, "for though time is precious, I shall be thankful to spend a few minutes in these mountains, among those with whom I hope to dwell for ever on Mount Zion." My friend, M. ——, mounted to the second story, followed by his companion. He found the female with whom he had conversed, surrounded by her daughters and her grandaughters, all busily employed in five looms, filled with galloons and ribbons, destined for the capital and the most distant cities of the world. The good

widow was between sixty and seventy years of age; her appearance was neat and clean; and all the arrangements of her apartment bespoke industry, frugality, and piety. "Ah! sir," she exclaimed, as M. —— entered, "how happy am I to receive such a visitor!" "Madam," replied M. ——, "I am not worthy to enter under this roof." "Why, sir," exclaimed the widow, "you talked to us of Jesus Christ, and ———." "Yes, madam, but I am a poor guilty sinner, and hope only for salvation through the cross. I was yesterday at St. ——, where they were planting a cross with great ceremony; were you there?" "No, sir; for it is of little use to erect crosses in the streets if we do not carry the cross in our hearts, and are not crucified to the world. But, sir, if you will not be offended, may I ask what you are called?" M. ——, pretending to give a general sense to the French phraseology, answered, "My name, madam, is ——." "Thank you, sir, I shall not forget; but this is not what I meant; I wished to know whether you are protestant or catholic, a pastor or a priest?" "Madam, I have not the honour to be either; I am a merchant; I desire to be a christian, and to have no other title but a disciple of Christ." "That is exactly as we are here, sir," exclaimed the good widow; and added, "but as you are so frank, are you, sir, catholic or protestant?" "Catholic," replied M. ——. Madam looked confused, and observed, that it was rare for the catholics to talk as her visitor had done. "I am a catholic," resumed M. ——, "but not a member of the Roman catholic church. I love all that love our Lord Jesus in sincerity. I do not ask in what fold they feed, so that they are guided and nourished by the good Shepherd and Bishop of souls." "O what a favour the Lord has granted us to meet with a christian like ourselves," said the affected widow, looking round her: "we desire to live in charity with all mankind. But to be frank also, sir, we do not go to mass, nor to confession, for we do not learn from our Testament, which is indeed almost worn out, that we are required to confess to sinners like ourselves, nor to worship the host, nor to perform penance for the salvation of our souls; and we believe we can serve God acceptably in a cave, or in a chamber, or on a mountain." "I confess, madam, in my turn," said M. ——, "that I am exceedingly astonished to find such persons on such a spot; pray how many may there be of your

sentiments?" "Here, sir, and scattered over the mountains, there are from three to four hundred. We meet on the Sunday evenings, and as often as we can, to pray to Jesus, to read the Testament, and to converse about the salvation of our souls. We are so much persecuted by the clergy, that we cannot appear as publicly as we wish. We are called *beguines*,* and fools; but we can bear this, and, I hope, a great deal more, for him who has suffered so much for us."

While the conversation, of which this is a sketch, transpired, the rooms had filled, the neighbours had been informed and introduced, at the request of the worthy hostess; and as many as could quit their occupations pressed to hear of the things of the kingdom of God. M. —— desired to see the New Testament. It was presented. The title-page was gone, the leaves were almost worn to shreds by the fingers of the weavers and labourers; and M. —— could not discover the edition. A female of respectable appearance, approached M. ——, and said, "Sir, for several years I have sought every where a New Testament, and I have offered any price for one in all the neighbouring villages, but in vain. Could you, sir, possibly procure me a copy, I will gladly pay you any sum you demand———." "Madam, I will not only procure you one," replied M. ——, eagerly, "but in forty-eight hours I will send you half a dozen." "Is it possible?" exclaimed the astonished villagers. "May we, sir, believe the good news? May we rely on your promise? It appears too great—too good—we will pay for them now, sir, if you please." "You may depend on receiving them," said M. ——, "if God prolongs my life. But I entreat you to do me the favour to accept them, as a proof of my christian regard, and an expression of my gratitude, for having been permitted to enjoy, in this unpromising spot, the refreshing company of the followers of Christ." The conversation then turned on the value of the sacred volume, and the sinfulness of those who withheld it from perishing and dejected sinners. After some time, the hostess inquired, "Pray, sir, can you tell us if any thing extraordinary is passing in the world? We are shut out from all intercourse; but we have an impression that God is commencing a great work in the earth, and that wonderful events are coming to pass." "Great events have taken place, and

* A term implying much the same as methodist in England.

news is arriving every day," said M. ——from all parts of the world, of the progress of the gospel, and the fulfilment of the holy scriptures." He then gave to his attentive and enraptured auditors an outline of the moral changes accomplished by the diffusion of the bible, the labours of missionaries, and the establishment of schools; but only such an outline as was suited to their general ignorance of the state of what is called the religious world. And when he had concluded they all joined in the prayer, "Thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven."

Anxious as was M. —— to pursue his journey, he devoted three hours to this interview. He exhorted them to receive and practise only what they found in the scriptures, to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart, and promised to use his influence to obtain for them a pastor who should feed them with knowledge and understanding. The termination of this extraordinary meeting was most affecting: tears of pleasure, gratitude, and regret streamed from the eyes of the mountaineers; and the traveller, though more deeply moved by having seen the grace of God than by all the scenes through which he had passed, went on his way rejoicing, and following the directions of the good widow, he arrived at the town of S——. In this town he had correspondents among the principal inhabitants and authorities, and under the impression of all he had witnessed, he inquired, as if with the curiosity of a traveller, the name of the hamlet he had passed on the mountain, and the nature of the employment, and the character of its inhabitants. "The men," said the mayor, "work in the mines, drive the teams, and labour in the fields, and the women and children weave. They are a very curious people, *outres illuminés*, (new lights,) but the most honest work-people of the country—probity itself. We have no occasion to weigh our silk, either when we give it out or take it in, for we are sure not to lose the value of a farthing, and the kindest creatures in the world; they will take their shirts off their backs to give to any one in distress. Indeed, there is no wretchedness among them, for though poor, they are industrious, temperate, charitable, and always assist each other; but touch them on their religion, and they are almost idiots. They never go to mass nor confession; in fact, they are not christians, though the most worthy people in the world —and so droll: imagine those poor people, after working

all the week, instead of enjoying the Sunday, and going to fêtes and balls to amuse themselves, they meet in each other's houses, and sometimes in the mountains, to read some book, and pray, and sing hymns. They are very clever work-people, but they pass their Sundays and holidays stupidly enough." This testimony, so honourable to his new acquaintances, was confirmed to M. —— from several quarters: and he learnt from others, what he had not been told by themselves, that, besides their honesty and charity, so great is their zeal, that they flock from the different hamlets, and meet in the mountains, in cold and bad weather, at eight or nine o'clock at night, to avoid the interruption of their enemies, and to sing and pray.

These accounts were not calculated to lessen the interest excited in the breast of M. ——, and immediately on his arrival at Lyons, he despatched six copies of the New Testament, and some copies of a tract entitled *Les Deux Vieillards*, (The Two Old Men.) Shortly after his return to Paris, M. —— received, through one of his correspondents of Lyons, a letter from the excellent widow with whom he had conversed. The modesty, dignity, and piety of this letter has induced me to subjoin a literal translation, not only to evince the influence of true religion, but to satisfy the reader, that in this narration no exaggerated statement has been made of the character of the mountaineers of St. ——.

"Sir,—I have the honour to write you, to assure you of my very humble respects, and at the same time to acknowledge the reception of the six copies of the New Testament which you had the goodness and the generosity to send us. My family, myself, and my neighbours, know not how adequately to express our sincere gratitude: for we have nothing in the world so precious as that sacred volume, which is the best food of our souls, and our certain guide to the heavenly Jerusalem.

"As we believe and are assured that the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ could alone have inspired you with the desire to distribute the sacred scriptures to those who are disposed to make a holy use of them, we hope and believe that the Divine Saviour will be himself your recompense: and that he will give to you, as well as to all of us, the grace to understand, and to seek a part in his second coming: for this ought to be our only and constant

desire in the times of darkness and tribulation in which we live.

" It is with this view, sir, that I entreat you to have the goodness to send six more copies of the sacred volume for several of my friends, who are delighted, not only with the beauty of the type, but especially with the purity of the edition; for it is sufficient to see the name of Monsieur le Maître de Sacy, to be assured that this edition is strictly conformable to the sacred text. Sir, as the persons who have charged me to entreat you to send six more copies of the New Testament would be sorry to abuse your genero sity, they also charge me to say, that if you accomplish their wishes, as your truly christian kindness induces them to hope, and will mark the price on the books, they shall feel it to be a pleasure and a duty to remit you the amount when I acknowledge the arrival of the parcel. Could you also add six copies of the little tract, entitled, *Les Deux Vieillards?* (The Two Old Men.)

" I entreat you, sir, to excuse the liberty I have taken, and to believe that, while life remains, I am, in the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ,

" Your very humble servant,

" The WIDOW ——."

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Considerable Allowance to Subscribers and Booksellers.

No. 150.

THE

SEAMAN'S SPY-GLASS;

OR,

GOD'S WAYS AND WORKS DISCOVERED AT SEA.

WRITTEN BY

A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

Formerly a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy

LONDON:

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;

Instituted 1799.

SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER-ROW, AND 65,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD;

AND BY THE BOOKSELLERS.

THE

SEAMAN'S SPY-GLASS.

THE NEW LAUNCHED SHIP.

WHEN we behold a vessel launched, for the first time, into the water, we know not what its future history may be. All we are sure of is, that it will have to beat about at sea, to contend with storms and calms, to be endangered by currents and rocks and sands, to be in frequent peril from the breaking sea, the forked lightning, and the ignorance and ill-management of the crew.

But how long it may float amidst these dangers and vicissitudes of evil we know not; neither are we acquainted by what event, or in what part of the world, it may be brought to its end. It may founder soon after it leaves port; it may be set on fire, and consumed in the midst of the waters; it may be torn, as it were, plank from plank, by its labouring and plunging in a heavy and continued hurricane; or it may be suddenly dashed to pieces on some sunken rock, even while the sky is clear, and the wind directly fair. By some such means it may be brought to its end. Or it may escape all these perils, and, after weathering many storms, and visiting many distant parts of the world, it may return in peace, and in its own port end its days, full of credit, and followed with many a long and kind remembrance by those who had sailed on board.

So when the children of men are born into this world, and launched on the unsettled ocean of life, we know not what their future history may be. All we are sure of is, that they are "born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward," Job v. 7; that, if they are permitted to continue the voyage of life for any length of time, they will have to contend with ten thousand dangers, as well from the flesh, as the world and Satan. They may go down to the grave soon after they are launched into life; or they may proceed awhile on their voyage, and then be destroyed by the flames of youthful lusts which war against the soul. Surrounded by the fair

winds and cheering skies of a gracious Providence, they may run on, thoughtless of futurity, inattentive to the advice of friends, and perfectly indifferent to the admonitions of God's word. Hence they may become covetous, idolaters, ambitious tyrants, or haughty and presumptuous infidels. The gales of human approbation, and the love of money, may so inflate their souls, that, like an overpressed vessel, they may be upset and perish. The deluging waves of adversity may break repeatedly over them, and they may sink in despondency and despair. Or, escaping all these evils, they may pass through a long and useful life, honouring God by works of faith, and benefiting mankind by labours of love: and having walked watchfully and humbly before the Lord, and through his grace surmounted all dangers, they may close their days in a good old age, in the bosom of their own families, and depart in peace, to be for ever with their gracious Lord and Saviour in heaven;

"Where, anchor'd safe, each weary soul
Obtains a port of rest;
Where storms ne'er beat, nor billows roll
Across the peaceful breast."

THE CONVOY AT SEA.

In times of war, merchant vessels wait for, and sail under the protection and guidance of, the king's ships. Every vessel hoists a distinguishing vane, and has instructions given her; and all are commanded to observe and obey them, and to watch and follow the commodore's motions. It is their wisdom to observe and obey his signals, and their safety consists in being near him. But some are so perverse, that, after receiving instructions, and joining the fleet, they seem to try how far they can neglect and disobey their orders. In the day time they are running too far a-head, and in the night either dropping greatly astern, or losing sight of the commodore's lights altogether.

When signal guns are disregarded, he sometimes fires a shot over them. This for a little while alarms the inattentive and unruly, and they make sail; but soon they again fall astern, or run straggling too far to starboard or port; the consequence of which often is, that some lurking privateer cuts them off, and conveys them into an enemy's port;

while their obedient and attentive comrades are proceeding on, and by and by arrive with the commodore at their intended port.

In like manner this world is, in a spiritual sense, one continued scene of warfare. We profess that at our baptism we came under the command of Christ, the Captain of man's salvation. In the Holy Scriptures we receive our instructions how to act on every emergency; and all of us are alike commanded to observe the word and the providences of our heavenly Leader. This is not only our duty, but our privilege. Our greatest wisdom is to look *constantly* to these signals; and our greatest, nay, our only safety, consists in living near to Christ. This all Christians know and experience to their souls' comfort. But, alas; there are many who nominally join the convoy of Christ, and receive his instructions, who never obey them, and who feel no real desire to do so. And many there are who, for a time, run well, but in seasons of temptation fall away. The world, and Satan, and their own perverse wills, in some way or other, lead them, from time to time, far from the strait and narrow path of life. They run further and further into crooked ways; and by and by fall so far away that the enemy finding them at a great distance from Christ, makes them his easy prey. He leads them into the regions of darkness and despair; while their neighbours who watched and prayed were preserved from temptation, and are at length conducted into the kingdom of heaven. Hence, then, since many a vessel falls short of making her intended port, and many a professing Christian comes short of the kingdom of heaven, let the language of our souls be,

If to the right or left I stray,
That moment, Lord, reprove;
And let me weep my life away,
For having grieved thy love.

O may the least omission pain
My well-instructed soul!
And drive me to Christ's blood again,
Which makes the wounded whole.

THE GOOD COMMODORE.

A good commodore is very anxious to bring all his fleet safe into port. If an enemy appears in sight, he places himself between the foe and his convoy, and determines, so long as he floats a gun above water, that not one of his friends shall be captured. For their protection he is ready to fight, and bleed, and die. Having driven off the foe, he rejoices to rejoin his alarmed convoy, and to conduct them on the remainder of the voyage. They, on their parts, cheer him as their best friend and protector: and the more they observe the shot-holes in his sides and canvass, and the knots and splices in his rigging, the more they venerate him, and determine to obey all his orders; not half so much from fear of his authority, which they know to be great, as from downright gratitude and love. He, on the other hand, is constantly noticing the state and situation of every vessel: shortening sail for the dull sailors, assisting the distressed, ordering the strong and fast ships to stay by the smaller, and himself, as necessity requires, taking one or two of the most feeble and crazy ones in tow. He loses none but such as, through obstinacy and disobedience, separate themselves, and quit convoy to pursue their own headstrong course.

Thus our gracious Leader, the Lord Jesus Christ, is anxious to bring safe into his Heavenly Father's kingdom all who put themselves under his guidance, mercy, and protection. He contends with all our spiritual enemies; nor will he allow hell or earth to capture one soul that hangs on, and looks up to him for help. He was well content to suffer, bleed, and die, that we might live. And now he has rejoined the hosts of heaven and taken his seat at the right hand of power, he rejoices to protect and conduct us throughout. When his humble, loving children contemplate the wounds he received, and the agonies he endured for them, they feel their souls filled with fresh love and gratitude, and determine, through his grace and assistance, to follow and obey him with all their hearts. He, on the other hand, notices all their endeavours to do so. He compassionates the weak and trembling. He smiles encouragement on the timid. He assists and refreshes those in distress; takes the most feeble and desponding as it were in

tow; carries them in his bosom, and patiently tarries for those who unavoidably drop behind. None will he leave, but such as obstinately and perseveringly grieve and resist his Holy Spirit, rebel against his known will, cease to abide in or with him, and who, in short, determine that he shall not reign over, or rule and conduct them. As to the others, impressed with a sense of their Lord's love and unwearied attention, they often join each other and sing,

"O what shall we do our Saviour to praise!
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace!
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem
The weakest believer that hangs upon him!"

NAVIGATING THE SHIP.

In vain would it be to fit out the finest ship in the best and most expensive manner; in vain to put the most valuable cargo on board, and to send her to sea in the fairest season, and under the most flattering circumstances; in vain, I say, would all this care and expense, and all these advantages be, if, when she got into deep water, the log, and compass, and quadrant, were to be neglected. She might float a few leagues indeed, but as to circumnavigating the globe, and returning safe, and enriched at last, there would be no hope of such events; on the contrary, the ship, and men, and cargo, would, sooner or later, be lost. Of this seamen are so confident, that they would not sail on board a vessel, whose officers were likely to act so mad a part. Hence, at sea there is great care taken to keep the log going, to steer by the compass, to consult the chart, to obtain soundings, and get observations of the sun, and other heavenly bodies, by the quadrant, as often as possible. Every careful navigator sees to all these things, and settles his reckoning, and endeavours to find the bearings and distance of the nearest land, and of his intended port, at least once in every four and twenty hours.

So with respect to man. In vain are all his best natural faculties of mind, his valuable helps of education, his fair and smiling prospects in the world; these will avail nothing towards conducting him safe and happy across this dangerous sea of life to a heavenly kingdom, unless they are

brought into constant and suitable use. Nor can all the natural and worldly advantages that ever distinguished man conduct his soul to heaven, without the grace of God attending, and blessing, and sanctifying all his natural gifts. This being the case, it becomes necessary for the most rich and learned, as well as for the poor and illiterate, to use every means of grace in their power, to hear the word of God, to pray, to meditate, to watch their steps, to bridle their tongue, to suppress their anger, to regulate their whole course by the compass of Scripture. Without this they may indeed, for a season, appear to go on as well as others, and, for a time, even to prosper; but shortly they will strike on some fatal rock, or founder in the whirlpools of ignorance, infidelity, or presumption. This the thoughtful Christian knows, and therefore he consults his Bible as the chart which is to point out his various dangers across this perilous and intricate ocean. From time to time, by self-examination, he fathoms his own heart, and compares its soundings with those laid down in the map of God's word. He looks forward, and calculates on approaching dangers and temptations, and then directs his eyes to heaven, to Jesus Christ the Sun of righteousness, for wisdom and grace to avoid them. His prayer is,

"Help, Lord, to whom for help I fly,
And still my tempted soul stand by,
Throughout the evil day!
The sacred watchfulness impart,
And keep the issues of my heart,
And stir me up to pray.

"Whene'er my careless hands hang down,
O let me see thy gathering frown,
And feel thy warning eye;
And starting, cry, from ruin's brink,
Save, Jesus, or I yield, I sink,
O save me, or I die."

This is the way by which he discovers what progress he has made towards the port of heaven, how far he has been driven back, or where, and how wide, he has deviated from the due course. He knows that of himself he has no power, nor even a will, to shun surrounding evils; he is

certain that God must work in him both to will and to do; but then he also knows that the Spirit of God is given to them who ask it; that he is commanded to seek and ask this all-sufficient guide; and by rightly occupying each intrusted talent, to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling; and therefore he often endeavours to stir up his soul to watchfulness and activity by such language as this;

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

"To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfil;
O may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will!"

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF WIND AND TIDE.

Every seaman knows how absolutely necessary it is that those who have the conducting of boats or ships should understand and take advantage of wind and tides while they are in their favour; because experience and common sense have taught them, that "wind and tide stay for no man." Hence they see the wisdom of catching a fair breeze when they can, and of making the most of it while it continues. When they are at sea they also put the same wise principles into action; they watch every shift of wind, and brace up, or square the yards accordingly; at one time hauling the bowlings, and at another slacking off the sheets; at one time sailing on the starboard tack, and at another on the larboard, as may best suit to the varying element they have to contend with. Hence it is, that with the same wind, by skilful and proper management, twenty different vessels may at the same time be sailing on twenty different points of the compass. It is by this watchfulness and skill, accompanied with the blessing of Divine Providence, that so many ships pass in all directions on the bosom of the great deep to their various destinations. If, however, men go on board a ship, who are too ignorant, or too idle, to take advantage of flowing tides, and fair and leading winds, it is no marvel if they lie wind bound in a foreign country, or perish at sea; while

their more skilful and persevering neighbours return home in safety and peace.

So it is in spiritual things. "There are seasons and fair gales of grace for our souls, golden opportunities of sal vation afforded to men, the neglect of which proves the loss and ruin of souls. God hath given unto man a day of visitation or opportunity, which he hath limited, Heb. iv. 7, and keeps an exact account of every year, month, and day, that we have enjoyed this favourable season; as appears in Luke xiii. 7; Jeremiah xxv. 3, 4; Luke xix. 42. The longest date of this fair wind, this favourable season of grace, can be but the time of this life; this is our day to work in, and upon this small wire the whole weight of eternity hangs. But sometimes this season of grace is ended before the night of death comes: 'the accepted time' is gone, men frequently outlive it, Luke xix. 44; 2 Cor. vi. 2. Or, if the outward means of grace be continued, yet the Spirit many times withdraws from those means, and ceases any more to strive with men; and then the blessing, power, and efficacy are gone from them, and instead thereof, a curse, of a stupifying, hardening nature, seizes them; as we find expressed in Heb. vi. 7, 8, and Jer. vi. 29. Of what immense importance, then, it is, that we should watch, and study, and take all advantages of these blessed winds and tide, these favourable visitations, these leading opportunities of grace. How necessary to trim every sail, every faculty of the soul, to all the various gracious providences of God;—that we occupy with every intrusted talent, and sail with every favourable gale, until, through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, we have run our distance, finished our voyage, and received our crown.

"How tenderly did our blessed Saviour bewail Jerusalem on this account! 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes,' Luke xix. 42. Oh, what precious seasons of grace have many men enjoyed! Yet these precious gales have blown upon them to no purpose! The Spirit has waited and strove with them in vain."* They have resisted the Holy Ghost, as their comrades did before them.

This was the case with the poor infatuated Israelites

* See Flavel's Navigation Spiritualized, chap. ix.

whom the Lord led for forty years in the wilderness; and before whose eyes he made so many of his judgments and mercies to pass. But they tempted and resisted his Spirit, and almost broke the heart of Moses, when he exclaimed, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" Deut. xxxii. 29.

And where is there a Christian minister, or a Christian seaman, who does not see abundant cause to make the same exclamation, whichever way he turns his eyes? Surely, if ever one truth were fully established on earth, it is that contained in Solomon's declaration concerning the unconverted men of this world; "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live," Eccles. ix. 3. Let every thoughtful Christian, then, whether on the land or sea, implore the mercy of heaven for these melancholy characters who have no mercy on themselves.

"O God, their inmost souls convert!
And deeply on each thoughtless heart
Eternal things impress;
Give them to feel their solemn weight,
To tremble at their guilty state,
And wake to righteousness!"

THE FAIR-WEATHER AND FRESH-WATER SAILORS.

On board of large ships there are all sorts of characters, and not a few who are called, "fair-weather sailors." These, so long as all is fine and smooth on deck, can talk much, and boast and swagger of their knowledge and readiness to do great things. But when the sea gets up, when the gale comes on in earnest, and the ship is in some danger, these boasting talkers are often found to be good for nothing. They have neither knowledge to perform their duty, nor courage to go through with it.

There are also, in every sea-port town, many fresh-water sailors, or young fellows, who, on a fine day, put on a gay jacket and pair of trowsers, and pull or sail about in a boat up and down the rivers, or at some harbour's mouth; on these occasions they curse, and swear, and think

themselves braver men than Nelson himself. And what still makes this folly and wickedness the greater is, that it is frequently performed on the Lord's day, that holy sabbath, when they ought to be worshipping God, instead of taking their childish pleasure on the water. But do the fine jackets and trowsers which these men put on, or the oaths they swear, or the swaggering language they use, make really brave men? No; for if the sky becomes cloudy, or a breeze freshens up, these counterfeit mariners soon hasten to the nearest land, and run with all their might from the vulgar gale, and unpleasant breaking waves, preferring a snug house and comfortable fire-side, where they can sit and talk brave language, and admire their unspotted sea dress; leaving it to others to face the storm in deep water. In one word, it is not a man's appearance, nor his language, that proves his real character. A stormy day, and real danger, are things that no true seaman ever wishes to meet for the sake of showing his skill and bravery; but they are the things that actually prove who are brave and skilful seamen, and who are only fair-weather and fresh-water sailors.

So in the Christian world, and in every society of professing Christians, whether by land or by sea, there are a variety of characters who much resemble those above described. There are fresh-water, or rather counterfeit Christians, or, if you please, imitators and imposters, who put on the profession of religion, and sail down the stream indulging their own pleasure and exhibiting their proud tawdry dress, and their dear, idolized persons; and while they are thus mocking God, they often persuade themselves they are great characters. These, however, are never found to bear reproach for Christ, nor to deny themselves one darling lust or pleasure. And if at any time their profession of religion threatens to bring such a trial, they quickly turn to the world, and leave vulgar Christians to encounter envy, hatred, malice, and reproach, for following that Saviour, who with his disciples of old was despised and rejected of men, and who is found to receive the same treatment from the lovers of pleasure in our own times. Others proceed a little further; they embark in the cause of Christ, go with his real servants, and are often, like the fair-weather sailors, found to talk with more confidence and freedom than old and expe-

rienced Christians. Yet these, with all their self-confidence and showy profession, are frequently found to flinch in times of trial, and in seasons of difficulty and danger to betray great ignorance, and great cowardice. As no real seaman makes light of past dangers, nor wishes to meet future ones, to display his courage, so no real Christian makes light of past temptations, or ever expresses his wish to encounter future ones: on the contrary, if it were possible, the wisest and bravest seamen would wish to pass through life without being exposed to one more storm; and the wisest and best Christians would desire to go on to the end of their pilgrimage without having to encounter one more temptation. But as this is not the will of heaven, they learn, as often as the season of trial comes, to look to him who alone can give them strength, and wisdom, and courage; and when he has brought them through the difficulty, their language is, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory," Psa. cxv. 1.

"I have no skill the snare to shun,
But thou, O Christ, my wisdom art;
I ever into danger run!
But thou art greater than my heart."

As to vain talkers, the fair-weather and fresh-water Christians, they are more to be pitied than despised. If the grace of God has made us to differ from them, let us not forget, that it is only the grace of God which has made the difference. And for them let our prayer be offered up.

"Jesus, on them bestow
The penitent desire;
With true sincerity of woe
Their aching breasts inspire:
With soft'ning pity look,
And melt their hardness down;
Strike with thy love's resistless stroke,
And break their hearts of stone."

THE SMUGGLER.

It once happened that a man, by hard labour and great savings, got money enough to build and fit out a very fine vessel, which he determined to run in the smuggling trade, as the speediest way of making a fortune. For a few voyages he succeeded beyond his expectations, and of course greatly increased his wealth. He now built a fine house, kept several servants, and fared sumptuously every day. But while things were going on in this prosperous way, as the world terms it, religion, and the soul, and a future world, were left quite out of the question. All his heart and thoughts were swallowed up, planning and running fresh voyages, and in carousing with his jovial companions at home. An end, however, and that an awful one, came to all these proceedings. One day he was met at sea by a revenue cutter, and, as he had a very valuable cargo on board, he was mad enough to resist; an engagement ensued, and several of the cutter's crew were killed. They however succeeded in taking the smuggling-vessel, and in conveying her to port; where she was condemned, hull and cargo, her captain's fine house and property sold to pay the fine, and he himself conveyed to prison, and tried, condemned, and hanged for an outlaw and a murderer. On his way to the place of execution he thus expressed himself; "O wretched man that I am! Had I been content with a lawful trade and moderate profits, I might, with the blessing of God, have now been comfortable, though perhaps not rich; yes, I might have been now going with my children to some kind friends, instead of being thus carried to my execution. I might have lived and died in the bosom of my family, instead of ending my life at the gallows. But I would be a rich and great man. I neglected God, I cared not for my soul, and now what is all come to? My vessel is gone, my property is seized, my life is forfeited, and I fear my soul is lost! Alas! alas! what does it now profit that once I had the finest vessel in the port; or that I had the best house in the parish; or that my old companions called me a hearty fellow? All is gone, and I am going to judgment, to receive according to the things done in the body, where the neglect of my soul,

my contempt of the laws of God and man, and my unnumbered transgressions, will all appear against me; oh, 'what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'" Mark viii. 36.

So, in like manner, many people in the army, and navy, on the shore, and in the merchant-service, for a time, get forward in the world by pursuing their different courses in a forbidden and unlawful way. So long as they do well for themselves, so long the world gives them credit for being clever men, and they themselves often think that their very prosperity is a proof of their wisdom. Poor mistaken creatures! They forget, or rather will not believe, the love of money, and the desire of power, are the roots of all evil and cruelty, of all injustice and bloodshed. Should these lines ever meet the eye of any such character, let me ask him, what will it avail to have made a fortune in lands or houses, if the kingdom of heaven and the mansions of glory are lost? What will it avail to have obtained an earthly title, if you have lost your title to heaven? What will it profit having obtained the command of a merchant vessel, or of a king's ship, if you have allowed Satan to have the command of your hearts, and this perishing world the first place in your affections? In one word, what will it profit a man, though he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul? There is no harm in a person's honestly and conscientiously obtaining wealth, or a post of command. But the evil lies in his seeking to procure, and in his obtaining these things, in a forbidden and unlawful way, as the smuggler seems to get rich by breaking the laws of God and his country. And then where is the wisdom, I again ask, in thus procuring earthly treasures, and losing our immortal souls? Especially when the Lord says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you," Matt. vi. 33. The world may praise the despisers of Scripture as much and as long as it pleases; but

"Woe to the men on earth who dwell,
Nor dread th' Almighty's frown,
When God doth all his work reveal,
And shower his judgments down!"

THE STORM.

No man has long been at sea without experiencing what the landsman calls tempests and storms. And those who have navigated foreign seas, and been accustomed to distant voyages, have often witnessed what no mere resident on shore can form any adequate idea of; the gathering darkness and wild confusion of a tempest-driven sky, torn asunder only to make way for fresh discharges of lightning and stronger howlings of the wind; the thunder rolling through the vault of heaven, and shaking the trembling masts down to the very keels of the labouring vessel; the mountain-waves, piling on each other, rushing forward, and sounding the very knell of death as they break, and half bury the restless bark in their dreary foam; the sails blowing from the yards, the yards themselves gone in the slings; the masts perhaps plunging over the side, and carrying part of the hapless crew with them into the merciless deep; the groaning wreck rolling ungovernable in the trough of the sea; the leaks increasing, and gaining on the crew; the chain-pumps sending forth their dismal, clanking sound; and above all, a frightful lee-shore stretching itself within view, and every hour becoming more and more distinct, frowning only death on all who approach it. These are scenes on which poets have often written, and orators have harangued their audience; but they are scenes which neither poets nor orators can describe as they really appear to those who themselves go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters. These men do indeed "see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." O that they were but more inclined to acknowledge his hand, and to fear his power; to seek his blessing, and to love, and believe in his Son Jesus Christ! Surely it is no discredit for the bravest seaman to confess that his heart has often sickened within him, while his hands have still perseveringly laboured through these almost hopeless and melancholy scenes. The Lord has a voice that will be heard when he thunders in the excellency of his power; nor did I ever see that wretch who was hardy enough to call on God to damn his soul while the thunder rolled in his ears, and the vivid lightning passed before his eyes. On the contrary I have noticed that those who were, at other

times, altogether strangers to thoughtfulness and reflection, were, at these seasons, serious, sensible men. At these times they have been ready to allow,

> " There is a God that reigns above,
> Lord of the heavens, and earth, and seas;"

at these moments they have seemed half disposed,

> To " fear his wrath, to ask his love,
> And with their lips to sing his praise."

And now, reader, if you can find a profane infidel, whether officer or fore-mast man, who pretends that he never had such feelings on such occasions, that he never did, nor ever will, tremble at the sounding thunder in the skies, or the roaring, breaking surf, or a lee-shore, I will at once pronounce such person an enemy to truth, a fool, or a madman. It is not in the power of unregenerate nature to view such scenes as these with stoical composure and indifference: and none can contemplate such deaths with calmness and serenity but men of strong grace; who have a well-grounded hope that Christ Jesus has pardoned their sins, that the eternal God is their reconciled Father, and that the hour which throws their breathless corpse on the deadly rock will convey their happy, liberated spirit into Abraham's bosom. And this hope, this confidence, no infidel, nor profane character, ever did, nor ever will possess. There is no such peace as this, saith our God, to the wicked. Their souls are like the troubled ocean, never at rest, Isa. lvii. 20, 21.

But it is not only in the confused elements of this lower world that there are storms and tempests. These things exist, though in another form, in the spiritual world. There are tempestuous seasons in the life of a Christian man. There are storms and conflicts in his bosom which the ungodly part of the world are entire strangers to; yes, it may truly be said, that all who have, for any length of time, been navigating this restless, dangerous sea of life as Christians have, in their conflicts with their own hearts, with the world, and with the mighty powers of darkness, had real experience that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," Acts xiv. 22. It sometimes falls to the lot of those who fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant,

to walk in darkness, and have little or no light: for a season, their course leads them through gloomy deserts, and thence into the mire and clay; at other times they seem to be sinking in the deep waters, and all the storms and waves of an angry ocean appear to go over their souls: they look to heaven, but clouds and darkness are round about the Almighty's throne; they see nothing but supposed tokens of anger, and signs of his threatening judgment. The thunders of his righteous, violated law shake them. The lightnings and arrows of vindictive justice make them afraid. All their efforts seem useless; the storm yet increases, and hope sickens, and almost expires. Then it is that the yawning grave begins to shout, victory! victory! Then it is that death has an envenomed sting, and heaven is beheld as a coast, whose ports are shut against their entrance; as a shore where they are to be wrecked, and not saved! Of these things the thoughtless children of the world may sometimes have heard, and sometimes they may have talked about them; but still they do not, cannot understand them till actual experience has taught the otherwise incommunicable lesson.*

Should any talkative, bold professor here start up, and say, "He has laid aside all his fears and his legal bondage; that he has learned to walk in the freedom and liberty of the gospel, as one who knows his soul can never founder, nor his faith ever suffer shipwreck," it would be well for such person to attend to Saint Paul's admonition in 1 Cor. x. 12, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Surely when we consider the nature of our spiritual conflict we must allow it to be awfully tremendous. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,"

* The writer wishes it to be understood, that he does not consider it absolutely necessary unto salvation, that all Christians, or even any one, should be led through these deep waters to Christ as their refuge, any more than that it is necessary for the safety of every vessel to be carried by a tempest into harbour. It is enough if we have been so brought to Jesus, as that he has been, and still is of God "made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30. This is the great end of all experience; and wherever this end is obtained, it matters not by how gentle a passage the soul was conducted to it.

Eph. vi. 12. Hence it is we are directed to take "the whole armour of God," that we "may be able to withstand in the evil day," ver. 13; and, beyond all doubt, a watchful, humble, praying spirit, is an important portion of that armour. Nor is it any discredit for the most heroic Christian to confess, with the saints of old, that his fears are often multiplied, and his spirit cast down within him; that in time past he had nearly fainted, and sunk under the conflict; but that a gleam of hope still remained, which cheered his soul with the persuasion that he should one day see the goodness and the salvation of the Redeemer in the land of the living. Real Christian life is a life of conflict; a voyage made up of many storms, and some calms. It is an ocean whose waters are sometimes smooth, but more frequently rough and stormy; it is a contest and a race, in which the flesh contends against the spirit. It is that entrance to heaven, which is so strait and narrow, as to call forth not a few idle efforts, but our agonizing endeavours to pass its portal. Away then with all this empty, unhallowed boasting; since the Lord himself has pronounced that man blessed who is of a humble and contrite spirit, and that trembleth at his word. May the writer and the reader be always attended by that filial, sanctified fear, which shall keep us poor in spirit, and watchful unto prayer! Then, and not otherwise, shall we be enabled to surmount the storm, to fight the good fight, to finish our course, to keep the faith, and at last, through the redeeming love of Jesus Christ, to receive the crown.

O thou adorable and blessed Saviour, I do not ask an exemption from the allotted trials of man on earth; but I beseech thee to be a present God in every time of trouble, for,

"While thou art intimately nigh,
Who can violate our rest?
Sin, earth, and hell, we can defy;
While leaning on thy gracious breast?"

THE MIDDLE WATCH.

That ocean which we have lately considered under its rough and boisterous form is not always thus rude and tempestuous. It is sometimes smooth and placid as the rivulet that glides gently through our meadows;—a breeze indeed sweeps its bosom; but it is such as might carry along the smallest skiff in safety for hours and days together. This is a pleasing sight at all times, but especially so in the midnight season. To come on deck, and find all bustling duty suspended; to perceive every sail stretched to the fair and gentle breeze; to see the vessel cut her way silently, but swiftly, through the yielding waters; to look above and behold a cloudless sky, exhibiting stars of various orders and magnitudes dispersed through the wide expanse of boundless space; to watch the moon gliding along through their ranks, while her silver beams play across the rippled ocean as far as the eye can pierce:—all this is pleasing, and has a natural tendency to promote reflection. Nor do I doubt but some of my readers have enjoyed these scenes in common with myself. True, there are many on board who care for none of these things; men who seem to have neither eyes to behold nor hearts to admire the wonders of creation and providence. By them the fair-weather middle watch is passed through in a variety of unprofitable ways. Some walk the deck in sullen musings on what they consider their hard fate. Others, more cheerful, but equally uninterested with the works of God, collect together, and tell marvellous tales of enchanted castles, of Blue Beard, or Jack the giant-killer. Others join in singing some love-ditty, or warlike song of past battles and conquests. And some, wrapping themselves in their watch-coat, sleep away their time till, roused by the call of duty or the expiration of the watch, they descend to their hammocks. On these occasions, the thoughtful, intelligent Christian sailor will not break in upon, or interrupt his comrades in their enjoyments; so long as they appear to be happy, and no improper language is used, he will rather rejoice that they are comfortable. Though he may esteem their amusements as trifling, he will not use reproachful language, nor display the part of an officious intruder; but will seek his own superior enjoyment in thought and reflec-

tion on what surrounds him. Leaning over the gangway, or quietly pacing and re-pacing the deck, he will converse with God, and with himself, in some such way as this:

"Eternal wisdom! thee we praise,
Thee the creation sings:
With thy lov'd name, rocks, hills, and seas,
And heaven's high palace rings.

There thou hast bid the globes of light
Their endless circuits run:
There the pale planet rules the night,
And day obeys the sun.

If down I turn my wond'ring eyes
On clouds and storms below;
Those under regions of the skies
Thy numerous glories show.

Here the rough mountains of the deep
Obey thy strong command;
Thy breath can raise the billows steep,
Or sink them to the sand.

Thy glories blaze all nature round,
And strike the wond'ring sight,
Through skies, and seas, and solid ground,
With terror and delight."

But what are stars, or sun, or moon, or this earth, or yonder visible heavens, in comparison to one immortal soul?—There is an appointed time when these heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and these surrounding elements shall melt with fervent heat! But my immortal spirit cannot pass away! There is a day coming when the stars shall fall from heaven, as the fig-tree casteth her untimely fruit to the ground;—a day when "this earth, and all that it inherits, shall dissolve;" when this ocean shall give up its myriads of dead, and then be found no more. But my soul must still exist! O most gracious Lord God! do thou help me a poor worm, but still thy creature, and an immortal being, to think of thee as I ought, to love thee as thou deservest, to obey thee in all thy commands. Keep

my soul while it is hovering over the gulf of eternity; pardon all its sins through the atoning blood of Christ, and sanctify all its faculties by thy Holy Spirit, before it quits this short and fleeting life, to receive its eternal portion. O my God, ere that day arrives, do thou quell every sinful passion within my breast; suppress every unhallowed disposition of my will, as thy power has quelled every angry storm, and subdued every raging motion of these surrounding waters. O let my soul be steadily and rapidly urging on its way to thine everlasting kingdom, as our vessel is now pursuing her course to her port of destination; for surely, compared with this,

"Nothing is worth a thought beneath,
But how I may escape the death
That never, never dies!
How make my own election sure,
And when I fail on earth, secure
A mansion in the skies.

Jesus, vouchsafe a pitying ray;
Be thou my guide, be thou my way,
To glorious happiness!
Oh, write thy pardon on my heart,
And whensoe'er I hence depart,
Let me depart in peace."

THE ANCHOR.

So necessary are anchors to shipping that they could not possibly be safe without them. On ten thousand occasions they are the security of every vessel. By their means the ship is held in safety while the storm howls through the masts and rigging, and the breaking surge rolls by on either side. By them the vessel is prevented from drifting down with the current on some deadly shoal, and from being drawn in shore towards dangerous rocks, in calm weather. Often, when dismasted, and driving as a log, helpless and almost without hope, towards some harbourless coast or wreck-covered beach, the anchor is the seaman's last and only refuge. Just before his bark drifts among the angry breakers he lets it go, it plunges through the troubled ocean, drives through every restless wave, and, fastening on the firm bottom, rides his trembling, half wrecked ship in safety through the storm.

Hence it is that in the Scriptures our Lord Jesus Christ is called the Christian's anchor of hope, Heb. vi. 19; and said to be "both sure and steadfast." The mariner's anchor may, and indeed does sometimes fail him; and in that failure his last fond hope is gone, and destruction quickly follows. But the Lord Jesus Christ never did, nor ever will, fail one soul who makes him his refuge and hope, his trust and confidence. Oh, how great is the blessing of having such an anchor as this to flee to! How great is the calamity of being destitute of it when the day of trial or the hour of danger arrives! It is a blessing always needful to have at hand. The soul without it would be more forlorn and unsafe than a coasting vessel without ground tackling. We have seen how many perils surround and await the new launched bark; but these are really nothing in comparison to what encompass and way-lay the Christian; for

> "Dangers of every shape and name
> Attend the followers of the Lamb;
> Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
> And leave it to return no more."

At one time the powerful stream of human corruptions, or the impetuous tide of vicious example, threatens to sweep him down on the rocks of destruction. At another, the secret, and almost imperceptible, but no less dangerous, shoals of prosperity, fame, and smiling circumstances, endanger his very existence. At another, the storms of violent temptation, the overwhelming waves of an accusing conscience, or the furious gusts of unbelief, and satanic suggestions, may be on the point of dashing him on the very reefs of perdition: and why is it, amidst so many perils, that his immortal spirit does not suffer shipwreck? Because Jesus is its anchor and its stay; the eternal God and Saviour of men is his present help in every time of trouble. Happy indeed would that merchant be who could procure an anchor of infallible security to his vessel under every emergency. It would be considered by himself and his crew as beyond all price. But alas! such an anchor of safety for the bodies and natural lives of men is not to be forged out of the perishing polluted materials of this sinful world. Jesus Christ, however, is all this to the Christian mariner's soul.

He sends him forth, it is true, to contend with the dangers and buffetings of this world; but he has prayed that he might be kept from the evil, John xvii. 15; and therefore he will be preserved by an infallible and omnipotent hand.

"Though waves and storms go o'er his head,
Though strength, and health, and friends be gone;
Though joys be wither'd all and dead,
Though every comfort be withdrawn;
On this his steadfast soul relies,
Jesus, his anchor, never dies."

THE VOYAGE WELL ENDED, AND THE SHIP MOORED IN PORT.

At length the voyage is brought to its close; the homeward-bound passage is completed. Let us reflect upon this period, so much to be remembered by the wandering mariners. With what cheerful countenances, with what joyful, what inexpressible feelings, did the weather-beaten and long-absent voyagers behold and enter their long-lost native port? This was the happy hour, the thoughts of which bore up their spirits under the burning suns of Africa, and amidst the snows and ice mountains of Greenland. Yes, it was the thought of home, and the hope of returning thither, that made all the evils of foreign climates bearable, and all the hardships and privations of the voyage seem light. And now these thoughts, and hopes, and expectations are more than realized; the ship has entered within the pier-head;—the anchor is gone,—the sails are unbent,—the crew have stripped off their tarry, filthy garments,—have clothed themselves in new apparel,—are gone on shore, and in the welcome smiles of their dearest friends and kindred have forgotten all the storms, and dangers, and sufferings of the voyage, or only remember and speak of them to increase their present happiness.

But what is all this when compared to the long-exercised Christian ending the voyage of life in peace, and entering into that haven of eternal rest where he so much longed to be? All comparison sinks into nothing and vanity. Yet we may pursue the parallel, and observe that it was the hope of such a happy end which supported his spirits through the numberless trials and sufferings of life. When

guilt and renewed temptations depressed and grieved his soul; when pain and sickness wrung and enfeebled his body; when poverty marked his circumstances; and unkindness or neglect sat on the brow of every pretended friend; it was the hope of heaven that cheered his bosom, and strengthened him to contend with all the ills and evils he had to meet by the way. And now, behold, in the Lord's best time, all his fears and sufferings are ended, and happy experience has taught him the meaning of that voice which proclaimed to St. John from heaven, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours," Rev. xiv. 13. To the real Christian, whether seaman or landsman, death comes as a kind messenger to bid him ship off this mortal coil with all its defiled and defiling garments. With one hand he turns the mortal out of a frail tenement of clay, and with the other he opens to him the gates of heaven; where Jesus beckons him to enter, and clothes him with a spotless robe, puts a palm in his hand, and a crown upon his head. There, in the company of his dearest departed Christian friends, in the society of angels and archangels, and in the smiles of his glorified and visible Redeemer, he forgets all his former toils, and sorrows, and temptations, or only remembers and talks of them to increase his present and eternal felicity; for there

"All is tranquil and serene,
Calm and undisturbed repose;
There no cloud can intervene,
There no angry tempest blows!

"Every tear is wip'd away,
Sighs no more shall heave his breast
Night is lost in endless day—
Sorrow—in eternal rest."

Rev. chap. xxi.

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THE

ICEBERGS.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS COMMUNICATED BY A BRITISH ADMIRAL.

THOSE immense masses of ice that are formed in the northern seas, and, which occasionally breaking loose, are borne on the waves into more southern latitudes, and which are generally known by the name of icebergs, are very dangerous to navigators; more so than rocks: for if a vessel strikes upon the latter, there is a support generally afforded to the wreck, which allows the crew time to use such means for their escape as the nature of the coast may admit of, but these icebergs yield none. They are computed in general to exhibit only one-third of their real bulk above the water: that part which is concealed extending in an irregular shape in all directions, and slanting down towards the base. Thus, when one of them has struck a ship, it is impossible that it should uphold her for a moment, being not only a hill of glass, as it were, on all sides, but also perpetually in motion.

At one particular season of some years the icebergs come down in great numbers, and obstruct the passage on the North American coast, endangering the vessels considerably. They appear in every form, and of all sizes: some scarcely exceeding the dimensions of a small cottage; others appearing as the ruins of a large town; and others again of an extent that cannot be easily calculated, sometimes miles in length, and of a tremendous height. Not unfrequently, a ship is caught between two of them, that are hurled against each other by the impulse of the waves; in which case it is generally lifted out of the water, and either crushed by the violent compression, or plunged again into the sea by the parting of these strange and terrible masses. I have seen them

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off the coast of Newfoundland, tossed upon the billows, and looking so exceedingly beautiful that I should have wished for their nearer approach, if not aware how perilous it would be to our vessel. How mercifully does the Lord reject our inconsiderate petitions! How often do we long for those things which, if granted, would be our destruction, and murmur at those dispensations to which we may perhaps owe the safety both of our bodies and souls!

I met at sea with a gentleman who had experienced a most wonderful and providential escape when entangled amongst the icebergs: I will relate it, as nearly as my recollection of his narrative will permit

He was captain of a merchant vessel, that traded between the eastern and western shores of the Atlantic. It had often been his lot to take out missionaries, the messengers of God to the perishing heathen, who bore the glad tidings of forgiveness and peace to ruined man, through the infinite love of the Redeemer in dying to pay the penalty of their sins, and rising again, openly, to assure them that by His death He had overcome him that hath the power of death, that is the devil, and rendered the grave a gate of life to all believers. That the Holy Ghost would descend and dwell in their hearts, that through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, they might walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things. Such is the declaration of the gospel: and they alone are blessed who both know and experience what is here described.

Probably it was from the teaching of these missionaries, that the captain had become so well acquainted with the glorious truths they were sent forth to proclaim: he certainly appeared a very pious man; and in the attention he paid to the souls, no less than to the personal advantages, of his crew, there was good evidence that his was a living faith, glorifying God in the fruit which it bore.

His vessel had made her last voyage from England to the West Indies: thence she took out a cargo and some passengers for North America; but, on the way thither, was overtaken with a dreadful storm, sprung a leak, and would inevitably have sunk, with all on board, had

not the Lord mercifully heard the prayers of the poor destitute people, and given them strength to exert such persevering efforts as kept the ship afloat until they could put into the port of Halifax and repair the injuries she had sustained.

Once more the vessel sailed, but without any passengers. They could not await the slow process of refitting her: and therefore they providentially took their departure in another, by which they arrived safely at the point of their destination.

It was now the season when icebergs begin to accumulate in those seas: and an unusual number had already been observed about the coast.

To pass up the river St.-Lawrence was the captain's object; and he proceeded in that direction, but was driven out of his course by adverse winds. After a long time he found himself in the bay of Gaspé, and every hour the icebergs became more numerous around him.

Very thick weather came on: he proceeded cautiously, for the danger was most appalling: to which side soever he turned icebergs met his view, rising in grotesque shapes, rendered yet more strange by the effects of a constant fog, and frequently clashing against each other with a noise like thunder, destroying one another by the violence of the shock, and threatening immediate death to the trembling mariners, who cautiously guided their vessel through the mazes of these terrible rocks of ice, continually moving as they were from place to place.

The captain now felt the consolations of that religion which he had made his delight in the season of prosperity: he had never neglected, while gliding over smooth seas before a favourable wind, to direct the attention of his men to that book which now yielded the sweetest support to their drooping spirits. He had regularly assembled them to address the Lord in prayer, at every period of their voyage; and now they could approach the throne of grace, as those who well knew the way of access, and plead for the compassion of a reconciled father in Christ Jesus. They had not turned away or refused to hear his call in fairer times, and now they had no reason to apprehend that he would hide his eyes from their supplications, or mock when their fear was come upon them.

It was at daybreak one morning that their awful situation became fully known to them: all that day and night, and the following day, the captain remained upon deck, at the wheel, by which the rudder is governed, steering his ship through the frightful icebergs that enclosed it on every side. Another night came, and their danger only appeared more imminent: another day passed, and still the captain never left the deck.

There seemed, to the eye of reason, no possibility of escape: to proceed—to return—to be stationary, were alike perilous; but what cannot the eye of faith discern to encourage the believer, who "endures, as seeing him who is invisible," while the hand of a tender father is directing his course, and the watchful look of everlasting love surveying him?

The captain knew it was his duty to use every effort for the preservation of his own life and that of his men: he therefore worked diligently, and left the event to God. He ordered the boats to be in readiness to be launched in a moment; and a small stock of provisions laid up in each. Towards dawn on the third day, he was aware that a very large and dangerous iceberg threatened to cross the only place they could pass along, and he was doubly watchful: the faint gleam of the morning, reddened by its passage through the fog, appeared to tip with fire each huge mass of ice that lay piled around them; and the more distinct the scene became, the more evident was their exceeding danger. They proceeded—the iceberg came rolling towards their course—the captain hoped to evade it by a dexterous movement of the rudder, but in vain. With a force that stunned every person on board, the keel of the vessel struck on the base of the iceberg, for a moment became stationary, and then began rapidly to fill with water.

What an awful moment was that! Eternity seemed about to open upon their view: and to them it was as if the angel had proclaimed that there should be time no longer.

The boats were cut loose instantly; the sailors dropped into them; and the captain saw nine of his men in one of these diminutive vessels and five in the other, before he, the last who left the ship, entered the smaller

boat. When he did so, the deck of his fine brig lay lower than the edge of her little boat, and instead of descending, he had even to ascend into the latter: they pushed off, and in a few seconds nothing but the top of the masts remained above the water: an instant longer, and they too were gone.

If the situation of the mariners had been terrible when in their good sheltering ship, what must it now appear exposed in two puny boats that scarcely bore them above the surface of the ocean? What helpless objects were they now, surrounded by the towering icebergs, one of which could have easily borne down a thousand such boats in its way!

They looked up, and perhaps saw the overhanging edges of two such frozen crags meeting above their heads, as if combined for their destruction: they felt the grating of their little keels upon the bases beneath the water; and still the fog prevented them from beholding any objects but those that immediately surrounded them. To hoist a sail was impossible: all they could do was to row cautiously along in the direction of the land, as they hoped, at about eighty miles distance.

I asked the narrator what was his feeling when he stepped from his sinking ship into the boat: his reply was short but comprehensive,—"I felt that I was in the Lord's hands."

Such is the blessed privilege of the Christian, while his surest earthly prop is gliding from beneath him, while his enemies are mighty, and increase on every side; yea, while, perhaps, the mists of doubt are suffered to hang upon his mind, and to cloud the evidences of his faith; still, in the utmost extremity, he feels that he is "in the Lord's hand," and there he can willingly remain, for his mercies are great. The true believer may be parted from all that promises him rest and security on earth; but this is his comfort; nothing can separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

How beautifully David describes the dangers and terrors of their state who "go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves

thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths."—It is not possible for any person of feeling to read this description without forming some idea of the awful situation it describes; but none perhaps can fully enter it who have not experienced what it is to be heaved up on one of these mountain waves, and then to go rolling down again, as if about to explore the bottom of the stormy main, feeling their frail vessel tossed about, like a mere plaything, by the billows, and knowing that, if once engulfed, they must descend with it, never again to rise till the sea shall give up her dead. Sheltered in our homes, on the solid land, can we be so hard-hearted as not to remember in our supplications those who are thus exposed? Particularly when the wind is howling around our habitations, and the waving of trees and shrubs in the blast present us with some faint representation of a tempest-tossed ship, as though they would plead for the distant, defenceless mariners. Truly, "their soul is melted because of trouble: they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end." All that human ingenuity can devise, or mortal strength execute, is utterly in vain. They may move the rudder, but cannot compel the vessel to obey it; they may hoist the sail, but the wind rends it from the mast, and bears it through the darkened sky. One resource is left, which is too often neglected until proud man finds himself the sport of those inanimate works of God which do his bidding and shame the perverse rebellion of his rational creatures.—"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble." Then, and not till then, do they turn to him whose bounty they disregarded while he gave them calm seas and favouring weather; but beneath the terrors of whose outstretched hand they now shrink, and cry for mercy. Jesus pleads; they have an Advocate, who often would have gathered them as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, but they would not: and whose long-suffering would yet lead them to repentance. The prayer is answered; "he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." He who by the sacrifice of himself redeemed lost man from the curse of God's law, which would else have utterly destroyed the sinner's soul, also prevails by a word to

still the rage of elements that threaten their mortal life. To him is given all power in heaven and on earth: he commandeth the winds and waves, and they obey him.

The sailors who were now toiling in their boats through the icebergs in the bay of Gaspé, had experienced very recently what is here described. Their escape from destruction on the passage from the West Indies has been noticed; and new as was their present most fearful situation, the mercies of God also are new every morning to those who trust in him: they could look back upon their former peril, and, in the language of the apostle, cheer each other by the mention of him, "who hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." There were among them some who had a confident assurance that, through Christ, they were delivered from a much greater death than that of the body; and, in this confidence, they knew that to live was Christ, to die was gain; and that in all which could befall them, they were more than conquerors through him who loved them.

The Lord's hand was not shortened: they continued to pass unharmed all that day through the crowd of icebergs, thus resembling the church, the company of the faithful people, against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail, and whose enemies are continually driven back, when just prepared to swallow them up. Resembling also the individual believer, who, in the strength of the Lord, and relying solely upon him, yet diligently and warily works his own way through the legions of spiritual foes that overhang his path, and steadily proceeds towards the one object he has in view, the haven of eternal rest. It is yet invisible to his sight, but he knows where it lies, and by the compass of God's word he can satisfy himself that he is steering thitherward.

When night came on, the hearts of the poor mariners could not but droop. It was summer; but the air was rendered cold by so much ice, and the icebergs becoming less numerous had room to dash about more freely. Providentially, the weather was very calm: they committed themselves to the special guardianship of him to whom the night is as clear as the day, and sung, as they were accustomed,—

THE MARINERS MIDNIGHT HYMN.

Oh, thou who didst prepare
The ocean's caverned cell,
And teach the gathering waters there
To meet and dwell;
Toss'd in our reeling bark
Upon this briny sea,
Thy wondrous ways, O Lord, we mark,
And sing to thee.

That glorious hand of thine
That fills the fount of day,
And gives the lunar orb to shine
With silvery ray,
That hangeth forth on high
The clustering gems of night,
Can point beneath a beamless sky
Our course aright.

Borne on the darkening wave,
In measured sweep we go,
Nor dread th' unfathomable grave
That yawns below;
For he is nigh, who trod
Amid the foaming spray,
Whose billows owned th' incarnate God,
And died away.

How terrible art thou
In all thy wonders shown,
Tho' veiled in thine eternal brow
Thy steps unknown!
Invisible to sight,
But oh! to faith how near,
Beneath the gloomiest cloud of night
Thou beamest here.

To peaceful rest we go,
And close our tranquil eyes,
Though deep beneath the waters flow,
And circling rise.

Though swells the flowing tide
And threatens far above,
We know in whom our souls confide
With fearless love.

Snatched from a darker deep,
And waves of wilder foam,
Thou, Lord, those trusting souls wilt keep,
And waft them home:
Home, where no storm can sound
Nor angry waters roar,
Nor troublous billows heave around
That peaceful shore.

Morning came, and most welcome it was; for under the cheerful ray they beheld a long line of coast stretching before them, crowned with groves, and smiling in all the beauty of rich vegetation. How refreshing to the eye, how invigorating to the spirits, of the exhausted mariner! Very little ice remained in sight; just enough to remind them that they were not quite safe until they could gain the land, and to induce them more eagerly, under a full press of the canvass, that they now hoisted, to enter the clear harbour that opened before their view; where they arrived, without having sustained the slightest injury in their persons or health, and found every want liberally supplied by the compassionate hospitality of the inhabitants.

How prone we are to place our dependence upon things that in reality endanger our safety, and to regard with dread and aversion what alone is calculated to ensure it! These sailors considered their stout ship as that on which all depended, under God. Her lofty masts, her comfortable cabins, seemed a shelter to them; while to the moment when they must forsake her and trust themselves to the weak boats, they looked forward with dread and aversion. Yet the ship, by her bulk, placed their lives in more imminent peril; while the lowly boats glided safely over masses on which her keel must have struck, under projections where her rigging would have been entangled, and through openings that could not have admitted her prow. Is it not thus that we regard our station, our worldly means,

our external privileges, as most conducive to our higher interests, while God sees that, by depriving us of them, he renders our path easy, and our safety permanent, disappointing the designs of those who would pervert our blessings, and render them a snare and a stumbling-block to us? Surely many a child of God can set the seal of his experience to this assertion, and rejoice that he was not left to choose his own defences. When our ship is sinking, let us not resign ourselves to despair: the boat, under the Lord's guidance, may do even better service.

Should this little narrative fall into the hands of any who have seamen under their command, let me entreat them seriously to reflect upon the very great responsibility attending their station: I would say to such, Your charge is greater than that of the parent of a family or the minister of a parish, for in you the duties of both are united, and God will hold you accountable for their faithful discharge. Your men are shut out from all possibility of attending openly the worship of God, except as you promote their so doing: and if that be disregarded, little can be expected of private religion. He says, "They that honour me, I will honour;" and surely it is a gross dishonouring of him to let day after day, week after week pass, without an open acknowledgment of his sovereignty and love to you, in the services of prayer and praise. Unhappily, a great deal of labour must be done on the sabbath day, at sea: the vessel must be worked, but are you therefore to reject all thought of the Lord because compelled to violate the letter of one command? He knows how much is unavoidable, and what opportunities you have of glorifying him by a due observance of the day peculiarly his own. If his terrors, his works and wonders in the great deep, do not make you afraid, should not his love and mercy win your souls to gratitude and obedience? Of your own authority, you are in general, and very properly, tenacious: you know that if habits of inattention and disregard to your orders were permitted, the safety of your vessel would be hazarded every hour. Now, my dear friends, in giving you the charge of a crew, God delegates to you the office of upholding his authority also: and if you neglect it, he will surely take into his own hand the work of retribution.

Is it not awful to reflect that the souls of those, whose bodies are in daily hazard of being engulfed with you in the waters of the ocean, may also, through your cruel neglect, be dragged down with you to the bottomless pit, there for ever to reproach you as the means of their eternal miseries and your own? If you neglect them, is it not because you are ashamed to recommend the truths that your own conduct disgraces, and forbear to teach because you dislike to practise the precepts of Christianity? This is a sad aggravation of the sin, and the Lord will visit it as such.

On the other hand, how sweet is the serenity, even in the hour of darkest peril, of him who, like the friend whose story I have related, can say of his crew, "I have not kept back thy mercy and truth from this congregation." Even should his endeavours prove unsuccessful, he is clear from the guilt of their condemnation: each must give account of himself to God, and let it be the care of each to be enabled to say, "I, at least, have done what I could."

Seamen, if it be your lot to serve under those who take no thought for your spiritual interests, yet remember that they cannot possibly bar your access to the throne of grace, if you diligently seek it through Jesus Christ. Your duty is to obey those who have the rule over you, in temporal things, and to do it as to the Lord, knowing that he commands it; but if your superiors set you an evil example, you have not the slightest excuse in following it. To swear, to drink, to talk and act immorally, to neglect the worship of God, and despise his word, form no part of your obligations to any man. They are things for which you will be brought into judgment and condemnation, from which none can deliver you, save he who died "to redeem you from all iniquity, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Think not that the proper season to turn to God, is when the ship is sinking. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isa. lv. 6, 7. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation;"

and how can you—how dare you, trifle with it? You would soon break through a plank of wood that separated you from any thing you were determined to possess, and laugh at so feeble a barrier; yet such a plank, my friends, separates you from that eternity which you are so fearfully unprepared for; and you venture to riot, and blaspheme over the very mouth of that pit which is yawning to receive the despisers of Jesus Christ, who desire not the knowledge of his ways, and think his salvation a thing not worth seeking after.

Many a rock, my friends, threatens you with sudden destruction, as you plough through the billows of the sea; but there is one rock that offers eternal safety, even the rock of ages, Jesus Christ, to whom, if you are moored by the hope of the gospel, that anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, you may smile at every storm that can blow across your mortal way, and make your rest under the banner of his everlasting love, whose motto is, "quietness and assurance for ever."

He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Heb. vii. 25.)

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. (Acts iv. 12.)

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SHORT PRAYERS

FOR

EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK

BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The prayers in this Tract, though in their present form they suppose the petitioner in company, will be suitable to a person when alone, with a very few alterations; such as *I* for *we*, and *me* for *us*.

FOR SUNDAY MORNING.

O LORD, who, after thou hadst made the heavens and the earth, didst rest on the seventh day from all thy works, and who hast commanded us, thy creatures, to set apart a seventh portion of our time to thy more peculiar service; help us, we humbly beseech thee, to obey this thy holy commandment, by sanctifying this day to thy honour. We thank thee that thou hast been pleased to require us to love and serve thee; because we know that in thy favour only is life: and we bless thee that thou causest us to rest from our worldly callings this day, that we may enjoy more favourable opportunities for private, family, and public prayer, for hearing and reading thy holy word, for meditation, and for serious conversation with each other.

O Lord, we desire to begin the day and the week with thee. Let a solemn sense of thy presence be upon our minds; and while we offer our supplications, in the name of our only Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, comfort our hearts by the assurance that thou art nigh unto all them that call upon thee, even all such as call upon thee faithfully. Though we cannot see thee with our bodily eyes, enable us to believe that the prayers which we offer up unto thee, shall be heard and answered.

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We are, indeed, O Almighty Father, unworthy to be called thy children, because we have, in numberless instances, sinned against thee. Glory be to thy name, that thou hast given thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, to die for sinners: for we acknowledge that we must otherwise have perished everlastingly. Thy wrath might justly have consumed us in a moment, and have sent us down to hell. But thou hast had mercy on us, and hast made known to us by thy word, how we may be saved. O Lord, help us to ask, this day, with due anxiety of mind, as persons who are sensible of the value of their souls, "What must I do to be saved?"

We thank thee, O Lord, for the opportunities which we are invited to enjoy this day, of offering up our prayers and praises publicly in thy house, and of hearing those blessed truths, the knowledge of which is essential to the salvation of our souls. O give us grace diligently to attend thy word; enable us to understand it, and make us anxious to improve by it; that the sermons which we hear may not rise up in judgment against us at the great day. Bless, O gracious God, the ministers of thy gospel, especially our own, who show unto us the way of salvation. Do thou teach them, that they may be able to teach us. O Lord, may thy word this day awaken our consciences, that we may see more evil in the nature of sin, more danger from the guilt of it, and be more earnest to secure an interest in Christ, the only Saviour, from it. May our neighbours and acquaintances also be stirred up to a concern for their never-dying souls; and may thy grace be set forth in saving us and them from the wrath to come, which we confess we have deserved.

We pray, O Lord, that we may be kept this day from all worldly thoughts and words; and may thy Spirit suggest such things to our minds as are suitable to this holy part of our time. O may we keep thy sabbath in a becoming manner, and love it as the best day of the seven, because it is a season dedicated to thy service. Preserve us, while in thy house, from a stupid and a wandering frame, give us the Spirit of grace and of supplications that we may worship thee in spirit and in truth, strengthen our memories to retain what we hear, and make this day a time of real benefit to our souls, for which we may have reason to bless thee to all eternity We are ignorant;

do thou instruct us. We are guilty; do thou pardon us. We are wicked; do thou convert us, for Jesus Christ's sake: to whom, with thee, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, we ascribe all honour, glory, and praise, now and for evermore. Amen. Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR SUNDAY EVENING.

We thank thee, most merciful Father, for the blessings which we have received from thee this day. We bless thee for food and raiment, and all other blessings of this life; we acknowledge that we are altogether unworthy of every one of these blessings: but we adore thee chiefly for thy love, made known to us by the gospel of thy dear Son, for the means of grace and the hope of glory. Oh, how wonderful it is, that to us miserable sinners should be preached the forgiveness of sins through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we should be invited to partake of it! We have been told, O Lord, of our sinfulness before thee; we beseech thee to make us feel it! May the remembrance of our sins be grievous to us, and may the burden of them become intolerable. We have heard of a gracious Saviour, who died to put away our sins; oh may we believe on him, and receive him into our hearts as the hope of glory! And as we know that we cannot rightly understand what we have heard, nor practise it, without thy grace, O Lord, send to us thy Holy Spirit, according to thy merciful promise, that thy truth may take fast hold of our conscience, and be the means of bringing us to eternal life.

Lord, give us now, at the close of this holy day, a due sense of the unspeakable value of our precious souls. May we be convinced that a man would be nothing profited, who should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. One more precious sabbath is passed; and we know not that we shall see another. Before another comes, we may be called into eternity. Oh, how many sabbaths have we lost! How little has the present been spent as it ought to have been! How cold have been our prayers for thy grace! How insensible our hearts to thy word! And though we have been informed that Christ died to save us, how little have we been affected with that delightful truth! O merciful God, forgive us, and help us this night, before we close our eyes in sleep,

to flee to Christ for pardon and salvation; that, if we lie down to rise no more, we may sleep in Jesus, and be eternally glorified through him.

We pray thee, if we are permitted to see the light of another day, to grant that the recollection of what we have heard may be fresh in our memories through the week that we have entered upon. When we are tempted to sin, may we remember that sin crucified our dearest Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. O may we be enabled to resolve, in dependence on thy grace, to sin no more! May we shun the person and place which have led us to transgress in times past. May we fear to offend thee, more than to lose our very lives; and seek more to please thee, than to save those lives. O may we never be ashamed to acknowledge our design of living to thee! May we be ashamed of sin, and of nothing else. May we not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but manfully fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and continue his faithful soldiers and servants unto death.

O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy, and to forgive, receive our humble petitions; and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us, for the honour of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. Amen. Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR MONDAY MORNING.

Almighty and everlasting God, our heavenly Father, we acknowledge that we and all men were conceived and born in sin; and what is born of the flesh is flesh; and they who are in the flesh cannot please God, but live in sin, committing many actual transgressions. We know also that our Saviour Christ has said, No man can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate, and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost. Mercifully look upon us; wash us, and sanctify us with the Holy Ghost; that we, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's church; and, being stedfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally we may come to the land of everlasting life, there

to reign with thee, world without end, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are again entering, most gracious God, on the business of our lawful callings, in which thy providence has placed us. But we engage in the cares and business of the world this day with fear and trembling, lest through the temptations to which we are exposed, we should dishonour thee by sin, and so wound our own souls as to bring home with us at night a guilty conscience. O Lord, may this fear of offending thee be kept alive in our hearts all this day. May our employments be sanctified and made comfortable by a sense of thy presence. Let us remember, that, "to eat bread in the sweat of our brow," is a part of the curse of thy holy law, and the effect of our sinfulness. May this thought humble us, and make us patient under our labours. May we be truly thankful, that we are hitherto preserved from hell, and have a hope, through grace, of getting safe to heaven.

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts! O, make it our earnest desire this day to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! May thy Holy Spirit instruct us, even while we are at our daily employment, and bring to our remembrance what we yesterday heard. May we be kept from profaneness; may we be preserved from every temptation; may no sinful expression proceed out of our mouth. O, may we remember that we are the Lord's servants! May all our conduct be under the direction of his word. May we abhor sin, and fly from it as from the face of a serpent; and may nothing ever induce us to say, or do the least thing which our consciences condemn. But may we rather suffer any thing than wound our blessed Saviour, and grieve his Holy Spirit. Hold thou up our goings in thy paths, that our footsteps slip not.

Help us, O Lord, to spend this day, as if it were the last we had to spend on earth. We know not that we shall live to see another. May God of his mercy save us, for Jesus Christ's sake; in whose precious name, and comprehensive words, we sum up all our wants, saying, Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR MONDAY EVENING.

We do not presume to come into thy presence, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to lift up our sinful eyes to the throne of thy glory. But it is thou, O Lord, whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, thy grace at this time, that we may appear before thee as creatures in the presence of their Creator, as criminals in the presence of their Judge, as sinners in the presence of their gracious Saviour, and also as children before a kind and indulgent Father. To thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, but to us shame and confusion of face. We have sinned this day, O Lord, and deserve to die; but we have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, whose blood cleanseth from all sin.

O Lord, teach us to pray! O, pour out upon us the Spirit of grace and supplication! May the Holy Spirit help our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought. May he make intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered! O, produce in us, at this time, desires after thy favour and image, so strong, that nothing but real experience of thy pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace may satisfy them. We know that if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us, make us therefore honest in all our prayers, resolutions, and endeavours to mortify all sin, and to cleanse ourselves from all ungodliness and worldly lusts.

We look up to thee this night, O most mighty Lord, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; beseeching thee to keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul. Thou knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that, by reason of the frailty of our nature, we cannot always stand upright: grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations.

O God, whose mercy to us showeth thee to be our Father, which art in heaven, ruling over all creatures, hallowed and praised for ever be thy name, for all thy

goodness towards us; let thy kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, be established in our hearts; and let thy kingdom of glory also come; make us meet for the enjoyment of it, and put an end to all our troubles. Yet not our will, but Thy will be done, whatsoever it be concerning us in earth, whether for prosperity or adversity; let thy will be the disposer of us, as it is of thy holy angels in heaven, who cheerfully submit unto it. Only give us so much as is necessary for our temporal subsistence each day, even our daily bread, and we therewith will be content; but let us not labour, only or chiefly, for the bread that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life. Let our chief care be about our souls, and forgive us, miserable sinners, all our trespasses, for Jesus Christ's sake, who died to atone for them. Pardon us, good Lord, as we forgive them that trespass against us in thought, word, or deed: and when our former offences are forgiven, O keep us from committing more. And lead us not, by thy providence or permission, into the danger of temptation, lest we should fall by it; therefore leave us not, we beseech thee, to our enemy's malice, or our own folly; but deliver us from evil, from the evil one, and from all evil things, of which sin is the chief. These mercies we need; and though we are most unworthy, yet we ask thee for them in Christ's name. Thou canst help us, for thine is the kingdom and the power. Thou hast freely and frequently relieved poor penitent sinners; for which men and angels do acknowledge that thine is the praise and the glory. And we also shall, by thy mercy to us, join in this just acknowledgment, which shall be made to thee in heaven and in earth, for ever and ever, world without end. Amen.

FOR TUESDAY MORNING.

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. Having left thee, the good Shepherd, we have wandered into a wilderness of sin and misery, where we are in danger of perishing every moment. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, which are only evil continually; for the corrupt fountain which is within our

hearts can send forth only filthy waters. We have offended against thy holy laws. Thy laws are holy, just, and good; and it grieves us to the heart, O Lord, when we remember how we have broken them by thought, word, or deed. For we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done; and all this is true of every day, and every waking hour of our lives, since we began to reason and to act. We are in our souls full of disease, and ready to perish. But do thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners. Make us to feel the misery of sin; for, till we feel in ourselves the misery which our sins have already brought on us in this world, and exposed us to in the next, we shall not be heartily desirous of thy mercy. Spare us, O Lord, though we deserve to die eternally. For we confess our faults: and those who confess them, with godly sorrow, thou hast promised to spare. O let not the guilt of our sins thrust us down into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. But, O Lord, give us the grace of true repentance; that, mourning over the sins of our hearts, and the sins of our lives, we may fly to the cross of Christ as the only refuge for a guilty soul.

Thou hast mercifully spared us through another night. If thou, O good God, hadst not upheld our lives, we should have slept to wake no more. Help us seriously to ask ourselves this morning, whether, if we died last night, we have any reason from thy word to conclude that we should have died happily. Oh! how dreadful would it have been to have opened our eyes in hell; to have none around us but devils and lost souls; to have called in vain for a drop of water to cool our flaming tongues; to have felt the gnawing of the worm that never dieth, and the rage of the fire that is never quenched; to have been without hope of ever being delivered from that frightful place of darkness and pain! In this state we should now be, were not thy mercy great. O Lord, make us more earnest than ever we have been to save our souls. Help us to pray this morning with all our hearts. And oh, what an instance of thy goodness will it be, if we, thy poor sinful creatures, are, by the teaching of thy Spirit, brought to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to heaven at last, through his name.

Thou hast safely brought us, O heavenly Father, to the beginning of this day: defend us, we beseech thee, in the same, by thy mighty power: and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always what is righteous in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

If thou, O Lord, wilt condescend to receive us, we do here desire to give up ourselves to thy service. We have found the ways of sin to be the ways of present misery, and know that they lead to everlasting destruction. O, lead us in thy ways, which are ways of pleasantness and peace. We know, indeed, that the gate which leadeth to life is strait, and that the way in which we must walk, if we would be saved, is narrow; and that we shall find few companions to go with us. We see, O Lord, that the generality of mankind are walking in the broad road of sin and unconcern, that leadeth to destruction, both of body and soul, in hell. Lord, pity them, and enable us to pursue a different course: that so, at last, we may obtain an inheritance in thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who, in compassion to our ignorance, has taught us thus to pray: Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR TUESDAY EVENING.

We are favoured, O Lord, by thy sparing mercy, with another opportunity of meeting together in thy holy presence, and of bending our knees before thy throne of grace. Oh how greatly are we honoured in being permitted to speak to thee, thou King of kings! We have no distinguished situation in the present world: but while we have the honour of coming into thy presence, we will not envy our superiors their outward distinctions, which will last but for a short time. If our hearts, gracious God, are sincere before thee, and if we feel a real desire to serve thee, thou wilt vouchsafe thy gracious presence in the humble cottage as much as in the mansions of the rich. It is the contrite heart with which thou hast promised to dwell. O grant to us such a state of mind; and then, however poor we are in this world, we shall be rich indeed, in having thee for our friend and portion for ever.

If thou art our Shepherd, and we thy sheep, who hear thy voice and follow thee, then we can want nothing. Thou givest us food and raiment, although we have, by our sins, forfeited every morsel of bread we put into our mouths, and the cup of water which quenches our thirst. Give us thy grace, O Lord, that we may know, love, and serve thee; and we shall be content, whatever else thy wise providence allots for us, and be happy for ever.

And now, O Lord, we commend our souls and bodies into thy hands this night. Our bodies are wearied with the employment of this day, and thou hast appointed the hours of darkness for their refreshment in sleep. But we dare not close our eyes till we have looked up to thee to take care of us. Our houses may take fire, and we be consumed with them, unless thy providence watch over us. We may die without even time to cry for mercy. We therefore commit ourselves to thy merciful protection. We are sinners we know; but thou didst provide a sacrifice upon the cross to save sinners, even the chief of them. O Lord, save us, and grant, that whenever we are called out of time into eternity, we may die in peace with thee, through faith in the Redeemer's precious blood. O cleanse our consciences to-night from the guilt of our sins: and may we lie down on our beds with a well-grounded persuasion, that, if we never awake again on earth, we shall be received into Abraham's bosom. May our last thoughts be on thee and thy love to our sinful souls; and when we awake in the morning do thou engage our first moments of recollection in looking to thee our God.

Lighten our spiritual darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord, and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Every day, heavenly Father, brings with it trials and vexations; all of which are the effects of our sins. Trouble is the lot of every man, because all have sinned. Glory be to thy name, that thou despisest not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as are sorrowful. Mercifully assist our prayers that we make before thee, in all our troubles and adversities, whensoever they oppress us: and graciously hear us, that those evils which the craft and subtlety of the devil or man work against us, be brought to nought; and by the providence of thy goodness, may

they be dispersed, that we, thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thee thanks, with our lips, and in our lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; help us to acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins, which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy Divine majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. May we truly repent, and be heartily sorry for our misdoings: may the remembrance of them be grievous unto us, the burden of them intolerable. Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father, for thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ's sake; forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may hereafter serve and please thee, in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thou hast commanded, O Lord, those that are weary and heavy-laden with sin and suffering, to come unto thee, and hast promised that thou wilt refresh them. Let us experience the refreshing influence of thy grace on our souls this morning. Remember not our offences, which are many and great; neither take thou vengeance on our sins; but spare us, good Lord, spare us, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever.

Deliver us this day, we beseech thee, from all sin and wickedness, or we shall fall into it; and from our spiritual enemy, who, like a roaring lion, is going about seeking whom he may devour; and from everlasting death, which our iniquities have deserved. O Lord God of our salvation, we beseech thee, by the Redeemer's agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his precious death and burial, by his glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, to deliver our sinful souls from the curse of thy law, from the snares of Satan, from the sin that most easily besetteth us, and so, in the end, from everlasting damnation.

Let not our minds be this day so taken up with our

worldly business as to forget thee. But while we are diligent in business, may we also be fervent in spirit, serving thee, the Lord. May our souls, through this day, often rise up to thee in prayer and praise. Oh that sin, wherever we discover it, may be hateful to us! If we hear thy holy name blasphemed, or see thy holy laws broken by our fellow creatures, may our souls be grieved and shocked at it; may we mourn over the folly and wickedness of those who thus dare to provoke God: and may we be bold to reprove them in the spirit of meekness, asking how they can thus offend their Maker, and destroy their own souls. May our consciences be enlightened and tender. Whatever we do, may we do it as unto the Lord, and not unto men; striving to approve ourselves to Him who searcheth our hearts. O Lord, graciously help us to love our neighbours as ourselves; and to do to all men as we would they should do unto us. May we honour and obey our sovereign, and all that are put in authority over us. May we submit ourselves to all our governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters. May we hurt nobody by word or deed. Make us true and just in all our dealings. Grant that we bear no malice or hatred in our hearts. Help us to keep our thoughts fixed on Christ, our tongues from evil speaking, lying, and slandering: and may our bodies be the temples of the Holy Ghost. Grant that we may never covet another's goods; but may we learn to do our duty in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call us. And, as we know that we are not able to do these things of ourselves, nor to keep thy commandments, nor to serve thee, without thy special grace, therefore, O Lord, we call upon thee, in the words which thou hast taught us to use; saying, Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR WEDNESDAY EVENING.

O God, our Maker and Preserver, thou gavest us our being at first, and hast upheld it to this moment. Thou didst create us, and give us a reasonable soul, that we might believe in thee, fear thee, and love thee with all our strength. We were sent into this world to worship thee, to give thee thanks, to honour thy holy name and word, and to serve thee truly all the days of our lives. But we have not done this; we have loved other things more than thee,

we have feared other things more than offending thee; and, this very day, we have, merciful Redeemer, forgotten thee, the Author of all our blessings, and the fountain of all our comforts: Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners!

We thank thee, O Lord, that there is a mercy-seat, to which we are invited to come, that we may obtain pardon for the past, and grace for the future. O let us not pray as the hypocrites do, repeating with their lips what they do not feel in their hearts; lest our very prayers should in the last day rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us. While our knees are bended before thee, may we really feel an earnest desire after thy grace, to pardon what is past, and to preserve us from sinning any more. All our most secret thoughts are open to thee, as well as our words and works. Help us seriously to examine ourselves this night. May our sins be brought to remembrance, and may we not suffer them to slip out of our minds, till we have a good hope that they are forgiven, for Christ's sake. Let us not commit ourselves to rest, either with a guilty conscience, or a careless heart. But may we lie down, trusting to the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and looking to him for the salvation of our souls.

Suffer us not, O Lord, to suppose, that, by bending our knees in prayer, we do all that is required of us. May we be taught that prayer is designed to bring our souls near to thee, O Lord, and to make us like thee; that we may ask in order to receive, and seek that we may find; and that our prayers are of no use any further, than as they are the means of obtaining thy mercy, of rendering us more serious in preparing for death and eternity, and of teaching us to love thee more, and to serve thee better. Therefore, O Lord, bestow upon us the spirit of prayer; that we may pour out our very hearts before thee as our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ. As thou hast taught us to meet together, and in our poor and imperfect manner to offer up our supplication and praises day by day, O Lord, grant that we may become more spiritual, more acquainted with the blessed gospel, may love thy ways and ordinances with increasing fervour, hate sin with a more perfect hatred, and become more and more fit for thy eternal kingdom. O make us love to pray unto thee, and to praise thy name! Angels love to sing thy praise; thy servants on earth love to worship thee. O may we be

numbered among them, and love thy service also. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR THURSDAY MORNING.

O Lord, it is the office of thy Holy Spirit to convince sinners of their sins, and to make known to them, by means of thy own word, that precious Saviour by whom alone they can be saved; make known to us, we beseech thee, the power and willingness of Christ to save our souls. Teach us that He who died on the cross, to make an atonement for us, was God as well as man, and that therefore there is an infinite virtue in his blood, to cleanse us from all sin. Enable us to believe that He who gave himself for us, cannot be unwilling to receive, to pardon, and to bless us. And help us, in the belief of this, to come unto him, that we may find rest unto our souls.

O Lord, our sins are more in number than the hairs upon our heads; and every one of them deserves thy wrath. O, may we feel the burden of them, and never rest satisfied till thou hast taken them away. We would lay our sinful souls at the foot of our blessed Saviour's cross, beseeching thee to give us a comfortable assurance of thy forgiving love, through the merit of his precious blood. For how, Lord, can we go about our several employments this day, without reason to hope that thou art become our friend through Jesus Christ? For if we have no interest in Christ, we are accursed wherever we go, and whatever we do. Oh, how terrible a thing to remain this single day under thy curse! Gracious God, remove it from us by giving faith in the Redeemer of sinners.

We desire to remember that the vows of God are upon us, and that we are called by thy name. We pray, therefore, that we may be enabled to walk worthy of our holy calling; and particularly that we may renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; that we may believe all the articles of the christian faith; and that we may keep thy holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life. All this we acknowledge to be our reasonable service, and our duty. But, oh, how guilty have we been in forgetting these obligations! For, instead of

opposing and resisting the devil and his works, the world and its temptations, the flesh and its lusts, we have, alas! yielded to their influence. O thou God of all grace, forgive us, and help us every day to seek the knowledge of thy great salvation, and to remember how deserved our damnation will be, if we live and die in the neglect of it. May thy grace enable us to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; and may we at last finish our course with joy.

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee, and hast promised that when two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou wilt grant their requests; fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them, granting us in this world, knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR THURSDAY EVENING.

O most mighty God, and merciful Father, who hast compassion upon all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made; who wouldest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his sin and be saved: mercifully forgive us our trespasses; receive and comfort us, who are grieved and wearied with the burden of our sins. Thy property is always to have mercy; to thee only it appertaineth to forgive sins. Spare us, therefore, good Lord, spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed; enter not into judgment with thy servants, who are vile earth, and miserable sinners: but turn away thine anger from us who meekly acknowledge our vileness, and truly repent of our faults; and so make haste to help us in this world, that we may ever live with thee in the world to come through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And while we are thus confessing our vileness, and begging mercy, we entreat thee also to create in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us. Turn thou us, O good Lord, and so we shall be turned. Enable us to follow the example of our blessed Saviour. Like him, may we be meek and lowly in heart. O may we never cherish anger, wrath, or malice in our hearts: Lord, suppress all these evil tempers. May no bitter words proceed out of

our mouth. May our constant endeavour in all things be to please thee, our gracious and merciful Father.

May we think every day, O Lord, of our latter end; and may it be our great object to prepare to meet thee, our God, when thou comest to judgment. Especially, when we are committing ourselves to rest at night, may we remember that we must soon lie down in the grave. We should desire, in thy awful presence, O heart-searching God, to inquire to-night whether we have peace with thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and whether, if our souls should now be called away, we should find acceptance at thy bar. Thou hast commanded us to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith, and whether Jesus Christ be in us or not. O may our conscience, under the direction of thy Spirit, give a true and honest answer to this question. And if any doubt remain respecting the everlasting welfare of our souls, may we not rest until it is removed.

We bless and thank thy holy name for all the mercies of this day. We have, through thy kind providence, escaped many dangers, of which we were not aware, and from which no care of ours could have saved us; may our hearts feel thankfulness, while our lips express it. It is thou who continuest us in health and in strength; enable us to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world. Thou feedest and clothest us. O Lord, we adore thy undeserved bounty; and beseech thee to add to these temporal good things the highest bounties of thy grace in Jesus Christ. Feed our souls with the bread of life: clothe them with the garments of salvation. Give us spiritual health and strength, that we may walk in all thy commandments and ordinances blameless. O Lord, receive our prayers; receive our praises; and, in the hour of death, O heavenly Father, receive our departing souls, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR FRIDAY MORNING.

We have laid down and slept, most gracious Father, and have again risen to acknowledge that it is thou only that makest us to dwell in safety. We are bound, O Lord, by every tie of love and gratitude, daily to bow our sinful bodies and souls before thy Divine Majesty. O

how guilty should we be, were we to neglect to worship thee! We should then resemble the devil, that proud rebellious spirit, who is thine enemy and ours. But though thy mercy hath taught us to bend our knees before thee, yet, O Lord, how poor is the manner in which we adore thy name! How little thankfulness we feel for mercies received! How little self-abasement for a sinful nature, and numberless acts of transgression whereby we have offended thee! How faint are our desires to glorify thee this day! O kindle in our hearts more love to thy name, and help us with this new day to begin a new life. We might have awoke in hell; but we are spared to see another day. O, that we may begin and spend it in faith and love of thee our God!

We have lived hitherto in the world to little purpose. We were created, and sent into it to love and serve thee. But, alas, we have loved other objects more than thee; and have served divers lusts and pleasures instead of thee. We have lived to ourselves more than to thee; and have sought our happiness in this world, instead of seeking it in thee. In these, and a thousand other things, we are indeed guilty. But we trust that thou hast taught us to see our folly, and made us ashamed of it. Here, therefore, O Lord, we offer and present unto thee ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee, humbly beseeching thee, that we may be filled with thy grace and heavenly blessing. And, although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Whether we eat or drink; whether we labour or rest from our toil; whether we walk by the way, or sit in the house; may we do all things this day to the praise and glory of thy name. However we are engaged, may the love and presence of our gracious Saviour be uppermost in our minds. O suffer us not unthankfully to forget his goodness to us; but while our hands are employed in our worldly business, may our hearts be mourning for our sins, meditating on the sacrifice that has been offered for us, and melted into love to him who died for us, and rose again! Oh, where should we have been at this moment had not Christ, the Son of God, pitied us in our low estate!

Blessings be on his holy name, for his mercy endureth for ever and ever.

O almighty and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern both our hearts and bodies in the ways of thy commandments, that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR FRIDAY EVENING.

Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and art able to give more than we can either ask or think, pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgive us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and give us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but for Jesus Christ's sake.

Once more, O Lord, we are permitted to present ourselves before thee. Let thy merciful ear be open to our prayers: and that we may obtain our petitions, make us to ask such things as shall please thee. We know that we cannot pray aright, but as thy grace influences both our hearts and lips. O give us a hearty desire to pray. May we now seek thy grace, as a condemned malefactor would ask for mercy of his judge; and do thou show that mercy to our sinful souls, for thy great name's sake.

Our days and years, O Lord, pass away with the greatest speed, and every one of them brings us nearer to death and eternity. O that we may feel a lively conviction of the vanity of all worldly pursuits, and the necessity, as well as the advantage of living by faith on the Son of God, that, whenever death overtakes us, it may find us prepared to leave the world, to come to thee. O God, who hast prepared for them that love thee such good things as surpass man's understanding, pour into our hearts such love towards thee, that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire. O, cause us to lie down this night with our affections set upon things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; and, when we come to die, may we submit to the cold hand of death with as much satisfaction as we are now about to undress ourselves, to sleep in our beds.

O God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, grant unto us, that we may love the things that thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise: and so, among the sundry and manifold changes in this world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found. O, suffer us not to be deceived by lying vanities. Suffer us not to deceive ourselves by the form of religion without the power of it. But grant us thy Spirit, to think and to do always such things as are right: that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may, by thee, be enabled to live according to thy will; not putting our trust in any thing that we do, (for, alas! all our doings are nothing worth,) but in Him who bore our sins, and carried our sorrows. May his blessed name, O Lord, become every day more precious to us. May we always most thankfully receive thine inestimable benefits, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life.

Almighty God, who hast promised to hear the petitions of them that ask in thy Son's name, we beseech thee mercifully to incline thine ear to us, that have now made our prayers and supplications unto thee; and grant that those things which we have faithfully asked, according to thy will, may be effectually obtained, to the relief of our necessity, and the setting forth of thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR SATURDAY MORNING.

O most gracious Father, thou hast invited all who feel their need of thy grace, to come unto thee; and hast promised, that those who come thou wilt in no wise cast out. Thou fillest the hungry with good things, while the rich are sent empty away. O that we may feel that hunger and thirst after thy pardoning and sanctifying grace, which may at this time bring us to the enjoyment of it. May we long for thee more than for our daily food; and may we desire nothing so much as to experience thy peace, thy favour, and thy love. We are brought to the beginning of this day, that we may increase in the knowledge of thee, and give thee glory. O grant that this great end of our life may be fully answered

Thou, O God, art a holy God; Christ our Saviour is a holy Saviour; thy Spirit is the holy Spirit; thy heaven is a holy place; thy angels are holy angels; and thy redeemed people are a holy people. O Lord, make us also holy; for without holiness we cannot see thee. May our hearts be separated from sin, and united to thee. May we not only abstain from sin, but really hate it, because thou hatest it. May we hate all sin. Whatever is inconsistent with thy will, that may we abhor. May we hate ourselves, because we are sinners, and unlike thee. May we make conscience of our words and thoughts, as well as of our actions. May we desire not so much to appear good in the eyes of our fellow-creatures as to be so in thy sight. May we labour to approve ourselves to thee, thou heart-searching God. May thy word be the rule of our whole conduct; and thy glory the end of all our conversation. For we cannot enter into heaven, till we are thus made holy.

Keep, we beseech thee, O Lord, both our souls and bodies, this day, with thy perpetual mercy; and because, without thee, we cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable for our salvation. May thy grace always go before and follow us, and make us continually to abound in all good works. Increase and multiply upon us thy mercy, that thou, being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things which are eternal. We acknowledge that we can do no good thing without thee; O grant us the help of thy grace, that, in keeping thy commandments, we may please thee both in will and deed.

O Lord, as we are dying sinners, we beseech thee, for the sake of thy dear Son, mercifully to hear our prayers, and to spare us who confess our sins unto thee, that we, whose consciences are accused by sin, by thy merciful pardon may be absolved. Thousands of poor sinners, O Lord, who have been guilty and vile like ourselves, have found mercy at thy hands. Thine ear has not become heavy, that it cannot hear, nor is thy hand shortened, that it cannot save. O may we be added to the number of those who shall be monuments of thy grace for evermore!

We have nothing to plead in our own behalf, but that

Christ died to save sinners. We lie entirely at thy mercy; and have no hope, but in the name of that gracious Lord and Saviour, who hath taught us to say, Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

FOR SATURDAY EVENING.

At the close of another day, and at the end of another week, we meet together, O Lord, with thankful hearts, to acknowledge thy goodness in preserving us. Put us in remembrance, O Lord, that days and weeks, as they pass by, bring us nearer to death and eternity. We are now one week nearer to our end than we were at the close of the last. Oh that it may be found that we are more serious, and in a more awakened state of mind, and thereby become more meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. May we seriously reflect to-night, that man who is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery; that he cometh up, and is cut down like a flower; that he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay. May each of us remember, that in the midst of life we are in death. Of whom can we seek for succour but of thee, O Lord, who, for our sins, art justly displeased? Yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death. Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts, shut not thy merciful ears to our prayers; but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, thou most worthy judge eternal, suffer us not at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from thee.

We are favoured once more, O Lord, with the prospect of the returning sabbath. If we are spared to see it, O that it may prove a day of rest, not only from our worldly calling, but from worldly thoughts and earthly cares. May our minds be prepared, by a solemn sense of thy presence, for spending it to thy glory and our own profit. May we not be suffered to waste the precious hours in our beds; but may we rise to pray to, and to praise thee. May we awake with a devout sense of thy great goodness, and, as our Redeemer on that day arose from the dead, may we arise in holy desires to the place of his heavenly abode, and join with his servants above in showing forth the glory

of his name. O Lord, suffer not the sabbath that is coming to be spent as too many of those which are past have been spent; but may our souls be thereby prepared for an eternal sabbath, and may we begin to join the employments and happiness of the future world, even while we remain in this. Heavenly Father, tune our hearts to sing thy praise.

Help us, O Lord, to look forward with pleasure to those precious means of grace, which thy sabbath affords. May we expect, through grace, to derive more real profit and pleasure from them, than we have ever found in this vain world. We are utterly unworthy ever to see the light of another sabbath, ever to hear another sermon, or to be told any more of a dying Saviour's love. We are unworthy to tread thy courts, or to join thy people in those blessed exercises of prayer and praise, for which we were sent into this world. But, O Lord, thy mercy is great, and we are therefore encouraged to hope that thou wilt not take us out of this world, till thou hast fitted us for a better.

Once more into thy gracious hands we commit our souls. O Lord, save them; wash them in the precious blood of the cross; sanctify them by the grace of thy Holy Spirit; and, at last, receive them into thy everlasting kingdom, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

A MORNING HYMN. By Bishop Ken.

Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run:
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Redeem thy mispent time that's past,
And live this day as 'twere thy last,
To improve thy talents, take due care,
'Gainst the great day thyself prepare.

Let all thy converse be sincere,
Thy conscience, as the noon-day, clear;
Think how the all-seeing God thy ways,
And all thy secret thoughts, surveys.

Awake, lift up thyself, my heart,
And with the angels bear thy part,
Who all night long unwearied sing,
High glory to th' eternal King.

Awake, awake, ye heavenly choir,
May your devotion me inspire;
Like you, may I, on God attend,
That I, like you, my time may spend.

Had I your wings to heaven I'd fly,
But God shall that defect supply;
And my soul wing'd with warm desire,
Shall all day long to heaven aspire.

All praise to Thee, who safe hast kept,
And hast refresh'd me whilst I slept;
Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake
I may of endless life partake.

Heaven is, dear Lord, where'er thou art;
Oh! never then from me depart;
For to my soul 'tis hell to be
But for one moment without thee.

Lord, I my vows to thee renew:
Disperse my sins as morning dew,
Guard my first springs of thought and will,
And with thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest this day,
All I design, or do, or say;
That all my powers, with all their might,
In thy sole glory may unite.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

AN EVENING HYMN. By Bishop Kenn.

Glory to thee, my God, this night,
For all the blessings of the light;
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,
Beneath thine own almighty wings.

Forgive me, Lord, for thy dear son,
The ill that I this day have done.
That with the world, myself, and thee
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, that so I may
Rise glorious in the judgment day.

O may my soul on thee repose,
And may sweet sleep mine eyelids close;
Sleep that shall me more vigorous make,
To serve my God when I awake.

If in the night I sleepless lie,
My soul with heavenly thoughts supply;
Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,
No powers of darkness me molest.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

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No. 249.

THE

HONEST WATERMAN;

OR SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF

THOMAS MANN.

See page 31.

A GENTLEMAN in London was called upon by a Waterman of respectable appearance, and his attention requested on the subject of a religious society, to which he was Treasurer. The circumstances of the interview were such as to make an impression of deep interest on his mind. The Waterman's business was to pay a legacy of fifty pounds to the funds of the institution to which the gentleman belonged. The person who

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799;
DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

had left this money was his uncle, the late Thomas Mann, of St. Katharine's, by the Tower, London. A feeling somewhat different from that of common curiosity gave rise to the inquiries which followed. "What profession was your uncle?" "A waterman, sir."—"A waterman! what, was he a lighter-man?—did he keep barges?" "No, sir; he was only a sculler-man; he had nothing but a small boat for taking passengers, labouring with his own hands."—"But how could a sculler-man save so much money, as to leave fifty pounds in charity?" "He was very industrious, sir, and very frugal; he has left a great many legacies to religious and benevolent societies, besides money to his relations."—"Was he then a miser?" "O, no, sir! the very opposite to that; he was a very generous man."—"How then could he acquire so much property?" "Why, sir, he was a very early riser, for one thing, and would often do nearly a day's work before other people were up in the morning; and then he was so very honest, in never asking more than his fare, and so very civil, and his boat and his person always so clean, and neat, and comfortable, that I suppose he had generally more fares than other watermen. His character was so well known on the river, that he was commonly called 'The Honest Waterman.'"

"What legacies has he left besides this?" said the Gentleman. "I can hardly remember them all. There is a hundred pounds stock to the Bible Society; another to the Church Missionary Society; another hundred, I believe, to the Bethel Union; another to the Spitalfields Benevolent Society. I do not remember them all, but there are nine of a hundred pounds to nine different societies. There is a legacy to the charity-school in which he was brought up:—there is also a hundred pounds to his brother-in-law, who married his sister,—she is dead:—there are other legacies to his relations and friends:—and he has left me the remainder."—"How much did he die worth?" "Between two and three thousand pounds stock: somewhat under three thousand pounds."

The conversation proceeded: "Was your Uncle a married man?" "No, sir; but he supported his mother and isters after his father's death till they died."—"You said he was a generous man:—how could he be generous, besid s supporting his mother and sisters, and yet save

so much money?" "Sir, his industry and frugality were so remarkable, that he always had wherewith to help a poor man. If any waterman happened to lose his boat, my uncle was always the first to relieve him:—and he used of a Sunday to take a quantity of silver to give to any poor persons whom he might see at church, or in the street, who appeared in distress, and proper objects of relief. I know he put a sovereign in the plate at the last charity-sermon which he attended."—"How old was he?" "He was seventy-five when he died."—"What kind of a man was he in his person?" "He was particularly neat and clean. On a working-day he wore a scarlet jacket, because he was Waterman to the Victualling-Office; this produced him little or no emolument, only about three or four pounds a year: but he was fond of it, being a very loyal man, and he looked upon himself as a sort of servant to the king. On a Sunday he appeared somewhat like a Quaker, for he latterly wore a broad-brimmed hat, and a light wig, with a sort of double curl. A friend of mine," added the nephew, "an artist, finished his picture a few days before his death, and it is an excellent likeness."—"Was he at all singular in his manners, as some old bachelors are?" "Not at all: he had nothing eccentric about him; he was a fine open-hearted man as ever you saw in your life. He was a very sensible man too, and a good scholar, considering he was brought up in a charity-school."—"Was he a pious man?" "He was indeed, sir; and he died so well! I have written down a great many of his excellent sayings while he was ill; he had a great deal of the Scriptures by heart. O, sir. he was so happy!—he said such things as would have delighted you. I am sure it would have done you good to have seen him and heard him talk."—"Well," said the Gentleman, "you should write down all you can remember and collect respecting so excellent a man."

Such was literally the information of this worthy nephew concerning his worthy uncle. The Gentleman to whom it was thus, apparently by accident, communicated, struck by a recital at once so simple and so extraordinary, immediately committed what he had heard to writing. He subsequently made diligent inquiry among those who had known "the Honest Waterman" during his life.

Their testimony was uniform. Such a character, so extensively useful, yet so little known, had never before met his observation. The picture, too, painted with much simplicity, but evidently with great truth to the original, became, to the new and posthumous friend of the waterman, an object of great interest.

Little more has been done in the following pages than to select, from the characteristic incidents collected by the nephew, such as seemed most likely to be of general interest, and to throw the most varied light upon the example of the Waterman. From the communications kindly made by some of those who knew and employed him, much information has been obtained; and extracts are inserted, at the close of the narrative, from two letters received by his nephew from worthy men in the same calling as himself.

The following history is intended to set forth its own moral; to teach by example so powerful, as to need no addition in the way of precept. Who can consider its contents without perceiving that Thomas Mann, although earning his bread by the sweat of his brow, knew how to turn the original curse into a blessing?—that, though poor, he was more truly rich than possessors of wealth who are unacquainted with his sources of enjoyment? Who can fail to observe the influence attached to this unostentatious individual? To how many persons did the force of his example extend! How many more did his benevolence and charity reach! With a view to render his character still more widely influential, his benevolence more durably beneficial,—and, without injuring that modesty which gave to his virtues the brightest lustre, by their concealment, to render his good works an example to his fellow-watermen, and his fellow-men of whatever degree—the following pages are made public.

Many who once knew him, may thus recognise the friend whose good offices were always at their service, and whose worthy character was long their pattern. May they, and every reader of this little history, be induced to inquire, how far the rule of life he followed, is the principle of their daily conduct; and, recurring to the same source for aid, actuated by the same love to God and man, may they be enabled to emulate the piety and share the reward, of "The Honest Waterman."

Early History of Thomas Mann.

THE subject of this narrative had, several years ago appeared in a light so worthy of forming an example to others, that a gentleman, who was in the habit of employing him, had formed an idea of relating some particulars concerning him, in the shape of a tract for the use of watermen. Not being aware of his circumstances, he offered to pay for an hour or two of his company, in order to gain from him the requisite information. His modesty, however, was not to be overcome. "There is nothing," he said, "in my life worth any person's knowing, or of any consequence except to myself." He cannot now be affected by either praise or censure: let, therefore, his simple story speak for itself.

Thomas Mann was born in the precinct of St. Katharine, by the Tower of London, June 4th, 1747, O. S. His parents were poor, but respectable: his father was in early life a seaman, and subsequently a custom-house officer. They had four other children, and were therefore glad to gain admission for Thomas into the Tower-Ward Charity-school. He there learned to write a good hand, and made some progress in arithmetic. He was accustomed frequently to express his sense of these advantages, and his gratitude for a benefit then much less common than at present, and without which he must have remained uninstructed. At the age of fifteen he was apprenticed to a waterman on the Thames, with whom he served the usual term of seven years. During that early period, his attachment was marked to his mother and sisters, his principal recreation being the enjoyment of their society: to the latest period of his life, he never spoke of the former but as his "dear mother."

When he had served five years of his apprenticeship, it pleased God to deprive him of his father, and thus to bring into active exertion that warmth of affection, and excellence of principle, which might otherwise have remained concealed. The death of his father was sudden. He was drowned in the Thames, while engaged in the duties of his calling. Many plans were immediately devised by Thomas for the support of his mother and sisters: he at first thought of obtaining from his master

a release from the remainder of his apprenticeship, but this he was not able to accomplish. A circumstance apparently trifling, but in its results evidently providential, led to one of his sisters procuring a supply of needle-work: the rest joined their efforts to hers, and by their skill and industry they supported themselves for some years with credit. Thomas used to cheer their labours by his company at the conclusion of his own; and his custom was to sit with them during the evening, and, by threading their needles, to expedite their work.

Young Mann had been led to expect that, at the conclusion of his apprenticeship, he should be presented by his master with the boat in which he had been accustomed to ply: he was not only disappointed in this hope, but further chagrined by his master's selling the boat without apprizing him of any such intention. He was, therefore, obliged to begin the world with a few pence which his mistress gave him, his only boon at the expiration of seven years' diligent service. He was of a spirit not to be discouraged by difficulties; and, with an ardour never diminished during a long life, he entered his calling on his own account, at first borrowing a boat from any friend who had the kindness and ability to lend him one. His persevering industry, and a little assistance from one of his sisters, at length enabled him to purchase a new wherry for twelve pounds. He was soon afterwards appointed Extra Waterman of his Majesty's Victualling-Office, a situation then attended with considerable labour, and never with much emolument; but it pleased him to wear the peculiar garb which designated him a servant to the king, whom, according to the injunctions of Scripture, he sincerely honoured. This disposition was still more gratified, when his respectful manners and propriety of conduct gained him an appointment as Waterman of His Majesty's Victualling Barge. He then wore the scarlet uniform and silver badge of the office, and conducted himself in it to the satisfaction of all, during thirty-seven years. The whole term of his connection with the Victualling-Office must, however, have been about fifty years.

His private engagements were unconnected with the office he held, and they were very numerous and extensive. His constitution being excellent, his attention unceasing,

and his deportment invariably correct, business of course increased; and he never, by intemperance, abused the good health with which he was blessed; Or, by indolence, failed to take advantage of the opportunities that offered for increasing his occupation.

Although proposals were repeatedly made him of situations which seemed to promise considerable emolument, yet he always preferred getting his bread by the labour of his hands, to entering upon scenes of unknown requirements and temptations.

The Honest Waterman's Diligence.

THERE was a peculiarity in the manner in which our Waterman performed his labour. He was what is technically called a "Hard-rowed Sculler;" and was generally admitted to be the hardest working man on the river. Not only in his youth, but when far advanced in years, it was commonly his custom to row as if matched against time, endeavouring to pass every boat ahead of him, and to keep completely ahead of those astern, even if they had the advantage of a pair of oars. His second boat carried about thirty hundred weight, for the greater convenience of conveying stores for the navy, yet he never shrunk from contending with boats much more lightly laden than his own. He made a point, however, of not rowing for a wager, and was never known to lay a bet of any kind. It was his practice not to wait for the turn of the tide; but, wherever his business took him, to return immediately to his usual plying-place, Iron-Gate Stairs, by the Tower. After rowing twenty or thirty miles, he would row up to the stairs in the lively, spirited manner in which he set out

As an instance of his power of body, and also of his attachment to home, it may be mentioned, that he one day rowed a party to Twickenham, and brought them back to Brentford, where he landed them about eleven o'clock at night: instead of passing the night there, he pursued his way to London, which he did not reach till one in the morning. He was prepared to recommence his labour as usual at six o'clock, remarking to his nephew, who accompanied him, how much benefit they had derived from a few hours' rest *at home*.

On another occasion, an instance of skill and ability was displayed by Mann, of which those only who are similarly occupied are competent to judge: and which was so extraordinary as not to be credited by many of his fellow-watermen, till confirmed by his own relation of the fact. In December, 1790, he was engaged to take in tow a stout boat, and convey her to the ship Ranger, to which she belonged, and which was supposed to be then lying off Deptford, or Blackwall. On arriving there, he found she had dropt down the river, and, with a view to overtaking her, he proceeded onwards as far as Gravesend. This was his last hope; she was not there, and had gone out to sea before his arrival; he was now thirty miles from home, and the tide had turned: hastily taking some refreshment, and not disheartened by his long and arduous toil, he set out on his return, with the larger boat still attached to his own, and he rested not till he replaced her in the spot whence he had set out, near Rotherhithe church. He suffered much pain from the state to which his hands were reduced by incessant rowing on this day, and was accustomed to notice the circumstance, on its anniversary, as a cause of thankfulness for the support he then received. In making a memorandum on the subject, he mentioned that the day could not have been more favourable: it was perfectly calm; had it been otherwise, he considered the effort impracticable. Those persons only who are acquainted with rowing, can judge of the immense labour which he endured in tugging a ship's boat fastened to the stern of his own, to Gravesend and back again, with only a few minutes' repose.

In case of a storm, it was not his custom, as it is that of many, to place his boat in safety, and walk home; but stowing the gear in the bottom of his boat, by way of ballast, and for her better condition to encounter the weather, he spared no exertion to reach home in an orderly manner. He was only twice known to quit his boat through stress of weather. The oars which he was in the habit of using were so thoroughly worn by his powerful grasp, as to have the marks of his fingers deeply impressed on them, and the stretcher on which he set his feet was always soon worn through in two places.

He was equally neat and orderly in disposing of the

lading of his boat, as energetic and skilful in her conduct, contriving to make her hold much more than she appeared capable of containing, and often surprising those who employed him by the commodious manner in which he adjusted the sails of a large vessel, or a great number of other articles, within his little wherry. The same coolness and caution distinguished all his actions, yet, though deliberate, he was always prompt and speedy in execution. These qualities ensured to him the favour and constant employ of many worthy and respectable individuals; as well as of others to whom his superior agility and judgment were of importance. The successive proprietors of Exeter Change were very sensible of his merit in these respects, and used to prefer him to every other waterman, sending him in quest of ships which were supposed to contain curious foreign beasts and birds. Labour of this kind was very severe, often taking him many miles from home, and causing him to suffer much from cold, night air, and contrary tides. His remuneration too for these services was inconsiderable; nor was it ever increased by any setting forth of their extent on the part of the Honest Waterman. He was, indeed, fully employed, and many were disappointed at not being able to procure his boat; but, as he never asked more than the regular fare, he had not any extraordinary means of increasing his property. So strict were his ideas of the principles of justice, that he frequently refused or returned money, when it exceeded the amount due to him, and was intended by the donors to show how much they had been pleased by his unusual intelligence and attention. By-standers would sometimes smile, and say, "See, if I had been offered money, whether I should have refused it." Once, when inquisitively questioned as to his property, which, in order to discover the exact amount, the inquirer rated too highly, Mann replied: "How can I be worth so much? I never got an easy shilling in my life."

When his boats were worn out, it was not his custom to paint and ornament them, in order that they might fetch more than they were really worth; but, after considering what he would have chosen to give for a similar article, he fixed that sum as the price of the boat to be disposed of, and would ask no more. Being

remonstrated with on the subject, he would mention something to its disadvantage, and always decide the matter against his own interest.

Mann was also remarkable for his facility in finding ships. It is well known that this, on account of the great number which crowded the river Thames before the several docks were formed, must have been a difficult task. His method was, on the arrival of a vessel, to learn, as soon as he could, her name and destination, of which he made a memorandum; and amidst the forest of masts, his skill in discerning the requisite one has been generally acknowledged. His attention to the mooring of ships was such, that merchants, watermen, and others, frequently came to him to inquire where any particular vessel lay; for, in fact, he was considered the general index to the river. In the cases of foreign ships, the difficulty was much increased; but here perseverance supplied what in the other cases was effected by skill and memory. He has sometimes visited forty or fifty ships in the course of the day, conveying on board officers of the Revenue; and when these officers were not able to visit all the vessels to which their duty called them, they feared not intrusting their papers to Mann, who executed the service for them with great fidelity and accuracy.

It was not by any assuming pretensions, or unbecoming flattery, that he gained the esteem of all who employed him. He reprobated every practice of the kind. Having one day to row an eminent merchant of London, the Gentleman recognised the Waterman, and shook his hand heartily. Alluding afterwards to the circumstance, Mann expressed himself much abashed, that such a respectable individual should have treated him with so much familiarity.

When unemployed, he was always to be found at the usual plying-place, ready to be taken by the first fare that offered, as he greatly condemned the practice of waiting for what might appear a desirable fare. It was the custom, particularly during the war, when watermen were scarce, to "sound the fares," as it was called, and, if the person who wished for a conveyance was not going far, to refuse taking him This, Mann said, always caused a temptation to ask more than was due,

as a compensation for the time wasted in lying by. He was always ready to accommodate persons thus declined by others, and would advise them not to give the watermen the particulars for which they inquired.

He was once engaged to hold himself in readiness at an hour specified every day. The Gentleman for whom he undertook to wait, and to whom he was well known, was prevented using his boat for three weeks, at the end of which time, upon his offering to pay, agreeably to the stipulation, Mann replied: "No, sir; only for the first two or three days; I afterwards learnt by inquiry that you would not want me, so I ceased to wait, and I will not take your money."

He was frequently the first at his post in the morning, and gained much of his earnings before other watermen were out of their beds. He thought hard labour never injured any one. With the exception of some bilious complaints and occasional head-aches, he enjoyed uninterrupted health; nor was he confined to his bed during his whole life, till his first and last illness. His food was simple and frugal: he seldom drank any thing but water to allay accidental thirst; or, when suffering much, he found tea a most refreshing beverage, and would take it in large quantities. During the summer he allowed himself cooling fruits, and used to carry a horn-cup in his pocket, and sometimes to moisten his mouth with water, which greatly lessened his thirst. He used malt liquor with his dinner only; nor could he be prevailed upon to share any of those indulgences which his constant labour would have rendered very allowable. To his temperance,—to his industry,—and to the subjugation of temper which he had attained,—there is no doubt he owed, under Providence, that robust health and extraordinary strength for which, to his last years, he was remarkable; as well as that competency which enabled him not only to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," but to do those various charitable actions which we are next to contemplate.

The Honest Waterman's Charity.

"He that careth not for his own house is worse than an infidel." In the spirit of this declaration, Thomas

Mann would not, during the life of his mother and sisters, indulge his generous disposition by frequent acts of general charity: he confined his gifts chiefly to the beloved objects of his earliest affection. During their respective lives, he was their solace; and in seasons of affliction, particularly at the approach of death, he was their principal earthly support. Having no family of his own, for he was never married, there were none immediately dependent upon him; and as he long lived alone, though kind to all his relations, and especially so to the nephew who has furnished the principal particulars of his life, his charity became more general and diffusive than it had hitherto been. The money also which he had accumulated as a provision for his sisters, in case of any accident befalling himself, at their death fell again into his own benevolent disposal. Many instances of his kindness were so literally done in secret, that they were never known beyond the objects whom they benefitted. His charity was so universal, so constantly and daily practised, that the detail of it would be as monotonous as it was unceasing; a few anecdotes only will be related, and a few of the methods detailed, by which, with all humility, he "let his light shine before men," and by which those who come after may be led to "glorify his Father which is in heaven."

He gave liberally after charity sermons, and always lamented seeing persons pass the plate without contributing. "They love a cheap gospel," he would say. He had not courage to enter a place of worship at which he was unaccustomed to attend, unless the sermon was to be followed by a collection, "and then," said he, "I can enter boldly." Between the hours of service, he would often walk up and down the streets, instead of going home; and if he saw any persons who seemed to suffer silent distress, he would accost them in a kind manner, inquire into their circumstances, and administer relief where it seemed to be required. For this purpose he always put a quantity of silver into his pockets on Sunday mornings. He used to say that it was a man's duty, when he possessed enough to supply his own wants, to continue the exercise of his calling for the benefit of others.

One Sunday he observed a poor man, much dejected,

looking carefully on the ground as he walked. At length he found the leg bone of a fowl or turkey, which he picked up eagerly, and was proceeding to scrape it with a small knife, when perceiving himself watched, he became much confused, and went on so rapidly that the Waterman lost him, but contrived by going round a street to meet him again. Addressing him kindly, "My friend," said he, "that's poor cheer, you seem to be in great distress," and proceeded to inquire the cause. It was a poor mechanic out of employ to whom he spoke, and finding the case a deserving one, he instantly gave him all the money he had in his pockets. He often mentioned this circumstance as having greatly affected him.

On another Sunday, in the evening, he met a person whom he had known in comfortable circumstances, and who told him so sad a history of his losses and distress, as to obtain from him all the money he had with him. Further inquiry proved to Mann, that his charity had not been so well bestowed in this as in the former case; yet it caused no deviation from his accustomed liberality and beneficence.

He frequently purchased boats, or parted with his own when half worn out, for poor watermen with families, sometimes receiving payment from them by instalments, according to their ability. He never prosecuted for the recovery of a debt; or received interest upon any sum borrowed of him.

Noticing a person, by whom he was one day employed, in great apparent dejection of spirits, he inquired the cause, and was told that it was occasioned by the want of a sum of money of the utmost importance to the person in question. He immediately advanced it, to be gradually repaid: and he said, that had the sum been twice the amount mentioned he must have done the same, so deeply was his mind affected by the uneasiness he has witnessed

A poor man one day crossed the river from Iron-Gate Stairs to Horslydown. Returning soon after to the person who had rowed him over, he asked if he had left any thing in the boat. Being answered in the negative, he was much dismayed, burst into tears, and said he had lost two pounds, which he missed on landing; that his

wife and family were in want of the money, and he knew not what they would do without it. He then proceeded disconsolately over Little Tower-Hill. Thomas Mann was at the plying-place, and, having heard his tale, was seen to follow, overtake, and give him something; but the value of the gift was never known, excepting to himself and the poor man whom it relieved.

At another time, as he was returning from his labour, he happened to see a poor woman, weary and with her feet much blistered, resting near St. Katharine's church. A crowd had gathered round her, to whom she was relating her distress. "There, my good woman," said Mann, as he passed by, "there is something to get you a night's lodging." The money was given in such a way as not immediately to show its worth; the giver was instantly out of sight; and the woman discovered a crown-piece.

Equally frequent were the cases in which he relieved the aged and infirm, by little weekly stipends, as a method of adding to their comforts; the occasionally distressed, by sums of money proportioned to the emergency of their circumstances; those who were out of work, by employing them and paying them for what he gave them to do. In this manner he furnished a poor man, who asked alms at his door, with a quantity of religious tracts, one of which he was to leave at every house in the neighbourhood, and then remunerated him for his trouble. Sometimes his stock of matches, bought of the poor, would so accumulate, that he would furnish the baskets of other necessitous persons from his store. He was once seen going up to a poor boy, who sat by the side of Tower-Hill, and after wiping his naked feet with a handkerchief, putting on them a new pair of shoes and stockings, which he had provided for the purpose. Many, whom he assisted with articles to sell in the street, were so struck with his generosity, as to declare they could not trouble him any more: some, for whom he had procured employment, would wait on him to return thanks for the comfortable circumstances in which they found themselves placed.

He was in the habit of giving half-a-crown at a time to poor industrious, men, remarking, that it was to get them something to eat for the morrow. This he was

accustomed to do on a Saturday night: according as God had prospered him he was able to distribute; and the gift was calculated to remind poor persons of the approaching Sabbath, and lead them to prepare for it.

When the minister and overseers went round the Precinct, to collect money for occasional charitable purposes, he was always grieved if they passed his door without calling for his aid. The last time they called, which was when making subscriptions for the distressed Irish, he contributed a sovereign.

He was fond of children; his behaviour towards them was kind and endearing, and he would often purchase cakes of the poor people whom he saw in the streets, in order to distribute among the little ones around. On finally retiring from labour, he laid in a stock of various sorts of clothing, blankets, &c.; and it formed a part of his employment, during that time which had previously been devoted to the duties of his calling, to select from his repository the proper articles for such as were in need.

He contributed statedly and regularly to many of the religious institutions. On those occasions when asked his address, it was his custom generally to say no more than "The Tower." Secresy was, probably, his motive for not becoming nominally an annual subscriber to any public charity. His nephew happening once to observe, in the Sailor's Magazine, mention of a donation of five pounds from "An Aged Waterman," said to his uncle, "I suppose you were meant." "There are many aged waterman besides myself," said the old man coolly. The donation was to the Bethel Union, for promoting religion and morality among seamen.

Among other directions which regarded his decease, Mann requested his nephew not to require the sum of seven pounds, which at his death would accrue to him from a club to which he had belonged; "for," said he, "I should not like it to be taken from a company of poor men." He had been during many years a member of this club, though he refused to become one for a considerable time after finishing his apprenticeship, on account of the manner in which it was conducted not meeting with his approbation. It consisted exclusively of watermen, who met together quarterly, when small sums were paid in, the accounts adjusted, and some peculiar privileges looked

after. He did not of late attend these meetings, but sent his contribution by some other person. While it was his practice to go himself, he stayed no longer than was absolutely necessary, excepting on one occasion, when the accounts were so perplexed that his attention was requested in order to arrange them. He used to say, that a Christian could not mix with profane persons without receiving some injury.

The Honest Waterman's Religion.

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." St. Paul thus describes the character of the genuine Christian. Accordingly, after contemplating the diligence, activity, and unostentatious charity of our Waterman, we come now, in tracing his religious character, to view more closely the principle from which flowed a life so consistent, so exemplary.

He has been heard to say, that his first impression of the importance of religion was occasioned by the death of his father. He then began to pray frequently, and to form many resolutions as to his future conduct; at the same time endeavouring to act conscientiously, and attending regularly on the performance of religious duties. He appears to have had an idea of his own ability to do this, independently of divine influence; and a considerable tendency towards self-righteousness seems at this time to have existed in his mind. By means of a relative, who was herself in the Methodist connection, he was induced occasionally to attend the preaching of the late Rev. John Wesley, by whose instructions his perception of his own state as a sinner, and of the only way of salvation through Christ were rendered clear and enlarged. But it was under the preaching of the late Rev William Romaine that he obtained the most satisfactory views of religion, and it was while attending his ministry that he first experienced peace of mind. Through divine grace, by searching the scriptures, examining his own heart, and attending the means of grace, he was led to feel that he was by nature a sinful and polluted creature, totally unable to save himself, and destitute of any spiritual

strength. Thus humbled under a sense of his sins, and feeling that all his own services, prayers, and resolutions were in themselves insufficient, he was led by faith to apply to the Lord Jesus Christ for the pardon of his sins and the salvation of his soul. He beheld the justice and mercy of God uniting to secure, by the atonement of Christ, the divine glory, and the salvation of all that come unto him, and believe on him. He felt his need of a divine Saviour, and that Jesus Christ was his only and all-sufficient Redeemer; and while the death and intercession of Christ were the foundation of his faith, he felt it his duty and his delight to live unto Him who died for him, and who was his gracious advocate above. Hence he lived a life of faith on the Son of God, who loved him and gave himself for him. Hence he was constrained by the love of Christ to walk in his ways, to obey his commands, and to live to his glory. And you too, reader, must seek the salvation of your soul through faith in the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, for there is none other name given among men whereby you can be saved. And if this faith be in you, as it was in Thomas Mann, it will work by love, and lead you to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things.

After the death of Mr. Romaine, Thomas Mann became a hearer of the late Rev. John Newton; and being his survivor, was of late years in the habit of hearing the Rev. Josiah Pratt, and the Rev. H. G. Watkins; to the latter he became known by his regular attendance at the Sacrament; though his usual seat was, as he always chose it, as much as possible out of sight. From his love of concealment it arose, that he was personally unacquainted with the ministers whose churches he attended: he had a great reverence for the ministerial character, highly disapproved of familiarity with those who belonged to it, and consequently, through extreme diffidence, did not seek for opportunities of gaining their acquaintance.

His observation of the Sabbath was unvaried. On two occasions only was he ever known to labour on that day. One of these occurred many years ago, and was unavoidable; in the other instance, having some papers of importance to deliver on board a vessel some way down the river, he set out at a very early hour, rowed with

uncommon speed and exertion,—returned, and afterwards, though much fatigued and exhausted, attended as usual to the private and public services of the day. Hearing of the profanation of the Sabbath by some persons with whom he was acquainted, he remarked, "They do not know the value of the Sabbath." He was accustomed on that day to take a lighter dinner than usual, in order to avoid drowsiness at church, to which the cessation of his customary labour might otherwise have made him liable. His conduct in the House of God evinced the sincerity of his devotion, and was observed as a lesson by some who noticed it, but who never, till inquiry elicited the knowledge after the death of its object, learned to whom they had been indebted for so striking an example. The following particulars are communicated by a gentleman who had thus observed him:

"Since the death of good old Mr. Mann, I have never ceased to regret that I had not made his personal acquaintance. The first time he attracted my notice, was some years ago, at the church of St. Mary Woolnoth, on a Sunday evening. It must have been the first time I had seen him, for his venerable appearance would, in any situation, have struck me immediately. I happened to seek a seat in one of the side aisles, near the form on which, as I afterwards found, he was accustomed to take his station. An occasional attendant only myself, habit or accident generally led me to the same spot, and there I always found my unknown friend. I needed no one to tell me that he was a devout man, and that he possessed a peaceful mind: his whole behaviour at church indicated the one, and his countenance was eminently expressive of the other.

"In retracing the slight incidents concerning him which fell under my notice, I seem to have the good old man's figure and carriage again before me. I fancy I see him as he entered the church, always *before* the commencement of the service, and, as he was accustomed to do on reaching his seat, turn his face to the wall, and, with his eyes directed upwards, silently supplicate for that holy influence, without which helpless sinners can offer no acceptable worship, nor obtain any spiritual blessing.

"The place he occupied did not admit of his kneeling;

but I never saw him sit, during either prayer or singing, an example in this respect which may be imitated with advantage by many of his juniors.

"In his devotion at church, there was nothing of vociferous or obtrusive zeal, but a steady, quiet fervour of spirit, an evidence of recollection of mind, and of that reverence which 'becometh God's house for ever.' He was very exact and solemn in making the responses, which he repeated in a subdued, but audible voice. I have occasionally taken my seat on the same form, and have held a side of his large prayer-book, which he has courteously offered me. In the praises of God, he appeared to take a peculiar delight, raising his voice, tremulous as it was become with age, and singing (I doubt not) 'with the heart and the understanding also.' And with what calm seriousness and fixed attention have I observed him listen to the sermon! I cannot but think, that the discourses he heard at St. Mary Woolnoth contributed to confirm and extend that genuine Christian liberality, both of mind and heart, of which his life and death have afforded proofs so striking and exemplary. I remember to have remarked at the time, that even in summer he never betrayed any symptoms of drowsiness in the House of God. This is the more extraordinary, when we consider the very opposite nature of his employment during the week. If, however, the mind be interested the body will generally be awake. The excuses usually offered for this evil in others, might with equal propriety have been urged by him: but it was sufficient that his heart was engaged. To him the Sabbath and its services were 'a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable.'

"The last time I recollect to have seen him was on the Good Friday preceding his death. On the evening of that day the Rev. Josiah Pratt is accustomed to preach the annual sermon for the Spitalfields' Benevolent Society, at St. Lawrence Jewry, Guildhall. Our venerable friend was among the earliest attendants of a very crowded congregation. I observed him come in with pleasure. He took his seat, as usual, in the aisle, on one of the benches which I had frequent occasion to pass in assisting to make arrangements for the collection. Upon inviting him to a better seat in a pew, which was modestly declined,

he rose and put into my hand a sovereign for the society. From a labouring individual, as I had always regarded him, a shilling would have appeared generosity. I therefore surveyed the good man and the piece of gold with equal surprise;—and though the money rested on my hand, I did not properly accept it, till, seeing my hesitation, he said, 'It is what I am used to give, sir.' I thanked him most cordially, and begged to be favoured with his name for insertion in our list of subscribers, and that he might be furnished with an annual report. To this request he replied, 'O no, it is of no consequence.' I again repeatedly urged my request, before I could prevail. At length, and only as I believe from a disposition not to appear uncivil in his refusal, he mildly said, 'My name is Thomas Mann, sir, but it is of no consequence.' I noticed that he left the church before the conclusion of the service, which was the reason I presume of his giving me the sovereign, instead of putting it in the plate, as had been his practice on former occasions. Before our succeeding anniversary, he had been called away to join the spirits of 'the just made perfect.'

"I shall certainly never forget his appearance. Strongly marked as was his countenance by nature, and furrowed as it then was with age, religion had impressed upon it a character of gentleness that would, I am persuaded, have attracted the confidence of a child."

He set great value on the Scriptures, and had many parts of them in his memory. No day passed without his reading them, generally very early in the morning, in winter by candle-light, and at night, after the labours of the day were ended. He used to commence, and read regularly through his Bible, a practice he had heard Mr. Newton recommend from the pulpit. Many passages were found, after his death, marked by himself, in the Bible he constantly used. There is something so illustrative of his religious experience, proving so conspicuously whence he derived his confidence in God, where he rested his hopes for salvation, and the motives by which his whole conduct was actuated, that it may not be superfluous to give a list of the principal passages thus marked. Some humble Christian may be led thereby to "draw water with joy from the same wells of salvation.'

2 Chron. xv. 2.	Psalm lvii. 1 : lxii. 1, 5,	Jer xxxi. 18, 19,
Ezra ix. 6.	6, 8 : lxiii. 1 : lxiv. 1 :	20 : xxxii. 38, 40.
Job v. 17, 19.	lxxi. 20 : lxxxviii.	Ezekiel xvi. 62, 63 :
Psalm xxv. 17, 18 :	8, 9 : cxlii. 1.	xxxvi. 26, 27, 32.
xxxi. 5, 7, 9, 19,	Isaiah xxvi. 3, 4.	Hosea xiv. 4.
23 : xxxiv. 8, 17,	xxx. 18 : xl. 28,	St. John x. 27.
18, 19 : xxxvii. 4,	29 : liv. 7, 8, 10,	1 Corinthians xi. 32.
5, 7 : liii. 1.	11.	Heb. xii. 5, 6, 7 : xiii. 5

The following lines were found between the leaves of his Bible, and, as he seldom wrote, they must have given him much pleasure to have induced him to copy them.

"Lines Written in 1746.

"Hail, sacred volume of eternal truth
Thou staff of age, thou guide of wandering youth,
Thou art the race, which all that run shall win;
Thou the safe shield against the darts of sin.
Thou giv'st the weary rest, the poor man wealth,
Strength to the weak, and to the lazar health.
Lead me, my King, my Saviour, and my God,
Through all those paths thy sainted servants trod:
Teach me thy two-fold nature to explore,
Copy the human, the divine adore
To mark through life the profit and the loss,
And trace thee from the manger to the cross:
Give me to know the medium of the wise,
When to embrace the world, and when despise:
To want with patience, to abound with fear,
And walk between presumption and despair
Then shall thy blood wash out the stains of guilt,
And not in vain for even me be spilt."

Copied from a Newspaper, 28th October, 1819

A gentleman who was in the habit during many years of occasionally using Mann's boat, gives the following account of a conversation he once held with him.

"I inquired his age, and found it nearly approaching seventy years, and that he had tugged at the oar for upwards of fifty. His earnings, about the ordinary income of a waterman, seldom rose to an average of five shillings per day. I asked if he did not make seven days in a week; but received a prompt and decisive reply: 'No, sir; I hope I know better than to do that. That would be taking what does not belong to me. The Lord's day is not mine, and therefore I never work

on that day.' I observed, that this was not exactly the reply which I looked for from one of his class in society, though I was as much pleased as surprised. 'Can you read?' 'Yes, Sir, I thank God, I can read.'—'Where were you taught to read?' 'At a charity-school in the city, whence I was apprenticed to a waterman. I was taught there to read the Bible;—and by that, I was taught to value the Lord's day.'—'Well,' I replied, 'as your gains have been so small, you could not lay much up. Have you not been anxious, as you have proceeded in life, lest from the very nature of your employment, exposed as it is to danger and to all weathers, you should be laid up by illness, and have nothing to support you.' 'No, sir; I have always believed in God's providence. I think I am just fitted for the situation which he has appointed to me, and that what he has fixed is best. I am, therefore, satisfied and thankful. I endeavour to do the duty which daily falls to me, and to be careful of my earnings; I have always had enough, and I have no fear about years to come.'—'Yet, my friend, if illness were to come, and you had not a provision made for the supply of your need in helpless age, ought not this give you some uneasiness?' 'No, sir, *that* is not *my* business. Future years are not my business. That belongs to God, and I am sure that doing my duty in his fear now, and being careful in what he intrusts to me, he will supply my need in future in that way which he shall think best.' I then said, 'We have heard, that teaching the poor to read has a tendency to make them discontented with the station in which Providence has placed them. Do you think so?' 'No, sir; quite the contrary. All that I have read in the Bible teaches us to be content with the dispensations of Providence, to be industrious and careful. A Christian cannot be an idle or an ungrateful man.'

"He mentioned with delight, when speaking of the confidence he had in the over-rulings of Divine Providence, the history of the preservation of the liberty and life of the Rev. Mr. Rogers, by the singular interposition of a spoiled child, a grand-daughter of the magistrate who was about to commit him and others to prison for preaching (in the reign of Charles II). She threatened her grandfather that if he did commit them, she would throw herself into the pond and drown herself. Alarmed

lest he should lose the child, on whom he doted, he dismissed the minister. Mr. Rogers then put his hand on the child's head, and blessed her and prayed for her, and she became a blessing: and they met happily again, after a lapse of many years. In relating this anecdote, he seemed to triumph in the certainty of a particular providence, and to justify his own full dependence on its care and kindness. He attributed, under God's blessing, all his happiness to the education which he received at the charity-school, for it enabled him to read the Bible, which he so much loved.

"On asking him concerning another waterman, who plied at the same stairs, he said, 'He is a very quiet man, but he well may be, for he has *nothing to trouble him.*'

"I regret that I could not learn more particulars. His, he said, was a smooth, even life, and he was indebted to God's goodness for every thing. On being further questioned, he became shy of answering, and my attempts to draw out his history were frustrated, evidently, by his fear of saying too much of himself."

The same gentleman states, that Mann had been the favourite waterman for many years with his family, and adds: "If an excursion was planned up or down the river, Mann was selected, because of his known integrity and care, and for the goodness of his character. He looked like a good man, and his civility and pleasing speech, his mildness and contented, grateful spirit, proved his inward peace. On working days he was always in the red uniform of, I believe, the Victualling-Office; but on Sundays he wore a cocked hat, his clothes plain and good, and his whole demeanour and appearance denoting a Christian citizen, happy in sanctifying the privilege of the Sabbath of spiritual rest.

"I had occasion to go one day to the grand Surrey canal, and Mann not being then at the stairs, I took the boat of another waterman, named H. M. from whom, on inquiry for Mann, I heard that he was very ill, and probably breaking up. This induced further conversation. I heard from M. that he believed that Mann had, in his younger days, an offer from a merchant in the Baltic trade, of very liberal pay, to transact his river concerns; but when he heard that this was to include the Lord's day,

he refused it, though it promised, if then accepted, to be for his life. From noble principle, he preferred remaining a waterman, working daily in his boat at precarious employ, and earning his few shillings a day as Providence should enable him; and he derived, from this triumph of faith in the promise of God, more solid enjoyment and cheerful peace than any income, joined with the reproaches of his conscience, could have procured him.

"M. said that he had known him upwards of forty years, and in all that time never heard a bad word from his lips. He had never known him to quarrel with any one, nor even use a passionate word: and as a consequence, others respected him so much, that no one ever quarrelled with him.

"He was early in his business, and diligently attentive to its concerns, waiting for what Providence might appoint to him. In this view of the good man, I have thought it might be properly said of him, 'As the eye of a servant is to his master, so was his eye to the Lord, and his expectation from him.' The result has shown that his Master was not unmindful of him, but provided him with even more than his necessities required.

"When I have seen the humble and cheerful manners of this respectable character, and how much he exemplified the doctrines which he professed to take as his rule, I have said to myself, 'Here is the patience of the saints.'"

Mann was a very loyal person. His patriotism was that of an ingenuous mind, springing from a natural love of order, and confirmed by an attention to the precepts of the Scriptures. He paid his taxes with great readiness. Being once too highly charged for the property-tax, he appealed, and representing his case fairly and clearly, the grievance was removed, and he willingly paid the proper sum.

At the commencement of the French Revolution, his mind became very uneasy as to the result of the confusion and error which seemed to abound on all sides. At length the words, "Be still, and know that I am God," were brought forcibly to his recollection, and so powerfully was he impressed with their mighty import, that his apprehensions were no longer burdensome. He did not cease, however, to use all the means in his power to counteract the principles which were at that time too

generally diffused, among persons of all ranks, by sober and honest argument, and the circulation of loyal papers. Some of these, remarkable for more point and spirit than might have been expected of one in his station of life, were found, after his death, in a box which he had appropriated to papers of this kind. For Roman Catholics he entertained sentiments of great compassion. He would say, "O, that fatal religion!" This feeling probably prompted the legacy of one hundred pounds, which he bequeathed to the Irish Evangelical Society.

The Home Missionary Society was also to him an object of great interest. He felt much concern at the details of the ignorance which still prevailed in many secluded parts of our own country, and frequently expressed his anxiety that the measures taken for its dispersion should prosper. Besides the legacy of one hundred pounds, he gave a donation of five pounds to that society the year before his death, which it appeared his intention to repeat annually.

With a spirit truly Catholic, Thomas Mann took into consideration the object contemplated, and was never influenced, either in its favour or to its prejudice, by the peculiar sentiments or denomination of those who undertook its accomplishment.

The spirit of Christian love which he manifested, was such as is expressed in the following

HYMN.

Lovest thou me? Feed my lambs. John, xxi. 15.

1 Do not I love thee, O my LORD?
Behold my heart, and see;
And turn each cursed idol out,
That dares to rival thee.

2 Do not I love thee from my soul?
Then let me nothing love:
Dead be my heart to every joy,
When JESUS cannot move.

3 Is not thy name melodious still
To mine attentive ear?
Doth not each pulse with pleasure bound,
My Saviour's voice to hear?

4 Hast thou a lamb in all thy flock
I would disdain to feed?
Hast thou a foe, before whose fac
I fear thy cause to plead?

5 Would not my ardent spirit vie
With angels round the throne,
To execute thy sacred will,
And make thy glory known?

6 Would not my heart pour forth its blood
In honour of thy name?
And challenge the cold hand of death
To damp th' immortal flame?

7 Thou know'st I love thee, dearest Lord;
But, O! I long to soar
Far from the sphere of mortal joys,
And learn to love thee more.

Dr. Doddridge.

Thomas Mann's behaviour towards those who injured him, was consistent with his uniformly Christian character. He sometimes received scurrilous and abusive language from watermen who, perceiving the preference he so deservedly enjoyed, were filled with envy, and vented their ill-humour in such accusations as, "If you will not swear, you will tell lies!" Not rendering railing for railing, he would reply, "No; I detest a lie, as much as I do an oath." He was never known to swear, or to use the name of God in a trifling or irreverent manner. In cases of injury, he sought not the redress which the law allowed him; his Christian temper, mild, gentle, and engaging,

softened every natural asperity, and, hoping for mercy himself, he was forgiving to others. Notwithstanding some instances of an opposite kind, he was generally treated by the watermen with great respect, much deference was shown to his opinion, and he was frequently chosen the arbiter of their disputes. On some occasions, when improper conversation was introduced in his presence, obviously intended to wound his feelings, he would manifest disapprobation by his looks, and retire out of hearing.

A gentleman, who frequently employed him, mentioning one day in the boat, the easy deaths of several old captains known to both parties, added, "Well; it is only a leap in the dark." "No, sir," said the Waterman, "death is a very solemn thing;" which put an end to the conversation.

Being once employed to row a party of pleasure, one of the number, a young lady, proposed singing "Rule Britannia," when Mann remarked, that he had heard Mr. Newton say, "God rules the waves, not Britannia."

In the exercise of his calling, he had many temptations to deviate from the straight path he had chosen; but he dared to be singular. It is not wonderful, therefore, that some thought him eccentric. He was of a frank and cheerful disposition, sensible and communicative, but so very timid and retired, that he never pushed forward conversation on religious subjects: on the contrary, he was rather backward in this respect, unless a seasonable opportunity occurred, and then he was ever ready to give a reason of the hope that was in him. With one old waterman, a long known friend, he held frequent discourse on the great topic of religion; but, though the general tendency and pious feeling of these conversations yet remain, the detail of most of them has passed from the survivor's recollection.

He was a man of prayer: his devotion was regular and fervent; but it was also secret, and the reward so openly bestowed manifested its acceptance. On one occasion, when, after being restored from circumstances of apparently imminent danger, his nephew brought him some food, he burst out into a strain of gratitude highly spiritual and excellent. Excepting this once, he was not known to engage in prayer in the presence of others,

the petitions frequently uttered during his illness being generally broken and unconnected sentences.

Thomas Mann did not rest his hopes on his own virtuous conduct, or his devoted attention to religious services, public and private. These he esteemed his duty and his delight, but he did not make them substitutes for a Saviour, or the ground of his hopes before God. No: he felt that his best services needed cleansing in the blood of Christ, and that salvation must be through his grace alone. Hence, to humble self and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ was his constant desire, while he united in the language and feelings of the Apostle: God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. (Gal. vi. 14.) And if you, reader, admire, and would succeed in imitating, the conduct of Thomas Mann, you must not fail to receive these divine truths with your whole heart; because they are the secret springs and motives to all that is truly excellent and well pleasing in the sight of God.

Such was the religion of the Honest Waterman—arising from Divine influences, governing his thoughts, words, and actions, influencing alike his daily walk and conversation, and the conduct he pursued in any emergency. It was this indwelling principle which induced the open cheerfulness, the constant equanimity, the unvaried tranquillity for which he was remarkable; causing his peace to flow as a river, and rendering his life so serene, as to leave little of variety in its progress.

The Honest Waterman's History continued.

After his mother's death, which occurred at a good old age, the eldest sister of Thomas Mann became his housekeeper and companion. She had long been unequal to her own support, being afflicted with lameness, and having naturally a very delicate and weakly constitution. To this sister he was much attached. During her life, he purchased all his savings into the funds in her name; so that when she died, he had to administer to three hundred pounds, which stood vested there as her property. His reason for this was, probably, that in case of her surviving him, as the state of her

health would incapacitate her from maintaining herself she might never be in want. When she died, another sister, who had married unfortunately, and was now a widow, took her place. The latter, unwilling to be burdensome to him, refused all remuneration for her services; but as he knew her property was very small, by offering to place it for her in the funds, he contrived to pay her an extravagant interest, and she knew so little of the subject, that she never discovered to whom she was indebted for the comforts it procured her.

From the decease of his younger sister, till within a few weeks of his own death, Thomas Mann resided by himself.

In the summer of 1808, an attempt was made to rob his house, and here that Providence in which he so fully confided was strikingly displayed. It was Mann's custom to leave home at an early hour in the morning, to repair to the water-side, and get his boat ready for the labours of the day, after which he returned to breakfast. He was generally absent a considerable time. The persons concerned in the robbery chose this opportunity for effecting their purpose. After watching him leave his house as usual, they gained an entrance by forcing the lock: they first ransacked the whole premises in search of hidden treasure, but Mann never kept a large sum in his house; they next examined his clothes, taking even the silver badge from his jacket; afterwards they searched a box, probably expecting it to contain bank-notes, but they found nothing in it more valuable than notices of sermons, and reports of charitable institutions. It happened that on this morning Mann had been attacked by one of his severe head-aches; instead, therefore, of remaining absent his ordinary time, he merely walked to the river to see that his boat was safe, and, without cleaning or preparing it for use, immediately returned home. The thieves were in the midst of their nefarious employment. On hearing the door open, one effected his escape; but the alarm being given, the other was speedily followed and taken, though not till after he had fired on his pursuers. On the trial, Mann bore a candid testimony, but with as lenient a bearing as possible, for which the prisoner, after conviction, expressed much gratitude. His sentence was transportation He

was a young man of creditable connections: bad company and gradual initiation in vice had led to the crime for which he was convicted. Mann had subsequently the satisfaction to hear that he was living, in respectable circumstances, in New South Wales.

Shortly afterwards, talking of the particulars of the robbery to a gentleman whom our waterman was rowing, and who was a Jew, the latter remarked: "They say the robber is a Jew; I am sure a Jew would not be guilty of so bad an action." "Then, sir," said Mann, "I am sure a Christian would not."

In the spring of 1819 he was superannuated by the Victualling Office, with a yearly pension of four pounds, merely as an equivalent for his annual suit of clothes. Neither this circumstance, nor the smallness of the pension, caused any murmuring; for Mann said he saw no reason why government should pay those who could render no service to their country. About this time he first mentioned his sense of the advance of age in the difficulty he found in getting over boats. He now began to be less active than formerly, and soon spoke of his intention to retire wholly from labour. Shortly afterwards, his last wherry was hauled up, under his own direction, on Tower Hill, and considerable expense was incurred in having it completely repaired; his nephew remonstrating with him on the inutility of bestowing so much money on a boat which he was about to sell, he replied, "It will be of the more use to any poor man who happens to buy it." He disposed of it at length to an indigent waterman, who had a large family, and who was to pay for it by instalments; but the man died before the money was paid.

After his retirement from labour, he appeared to lay himself out entirely for the glory of God, and the good of his fellow creatures; his acts of benevolence were continual, but as private as he could possibly make them; and he manifested a peculiar dislike to flattery, whenever it was mixed up with expressions of gratitude for the benefits he conferred.

Although adopting a mode of life so different from that to which he had been accustomed, time never appeared to hang heavy on his hands; he was not gloomy or fretful; the Bible was his constant companion, and when not engaged in reading or meditating on its contents,

he scorned to eat the bread of idleness. Accordingly, besides the distribution of clothing and money to the poor, which occupied him during some parts of the week as well as on the sabbath, he found various ways of employing himself, sometimes using edge-tools and making boxes, stools, &c. In all this, he was very dexterous for his years, and he once completed a pair of wooden scales for weighing his meat. His nephew, who had been apprenticed to him, and to whom he was always much attached, paid him a daily visit, and invariably found him affable and good tempered, ready to enter into conversation, and laying aside what had previously occupied his attention for that purpose.

In the spring of 1822, the house in which he was born and had resided during his whole life, with the exception of his seven years' apprenticeship, was, with several others in the neighbourhood, pulled down. He purchased a quantity of the old materials, and watchful for an employment which, while it amused himself, might benefit others, he sawed the wood and cut it up into bundles, which he sold to the poor around him at a price much below its value.

It was pleasant to see the old waterman, when he had left off labour, on a fine sunshiny day, sitting on a bench at his former plying-place, conversing with his old friends, and with the younger ones who had succeeded him. Hither he frequently repaired. He always seemed happy and agreeable; but his mind was sometimes much pained at the oaths and offensive language which too often met his ears. Perhaps, some of those who thus grieved him, have since seen the error of their ways, and mourned that they should have wounded the Christian spirit of so good a man, and still more, that they should have broken the express command of a holy God. Perhaps some of them may see in these pages the record of their fault, and, struck for the first time with a sense of its enormity, may determine to renounce the sinful practice; then, though it is too late for Thomas Mann to rejoice on earth at being the means of their reformation, yet "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.

Sometimes the old man would take a boat and row himself about the river, for exercise; or, if not equal to so much exertion, he would employ another waterman to

row him; occasionally he would go in a boat in quest of coals for his own use, or to bestow gratuitously on his poor neighbours. These gifts were always made with much method, and with due attention to the various wants of those for whom they were intended.

The Honest Waterman's Death.

In September, 1822, Thomas Mann entered a new house, built on the site of his former habitation. His landlord had accommodated him with a temporary abode, of which he preferred taking advantage, to residing for a time with his nephew, in whose family he feared an old man's infirmities would make him troublesome. Very soon after his second removal, his health began to decline, and his appetite to fail. He would not, however, consent to have any medical advice. On Sunday, October 6th, he was not well enough to go to church in the morning, but in the afternoon he went to Bishopsgate Church, and heard the Rev. S Crowther, of Christ Church, and in the evening to St. Mary Woolnoth, where he heard the Rev. Josiah Pratt, for the last time

In returning home, which he reached with difficulty, owing to an affection of his breath, he was seized with so much debility, as to be obliged to ask the assistance of an arm from more than one person; and he fell down once on his way. During the following week he seemed to recover. His nephew offering to read to him, he replied, "No; I now think on what I have read:" and afterwards he exclaimed, with much animation, "O, when I think of heaven!"—here his feelings seemed too much for utterance. Again his nephew proposed a removal to his house; but again he declined it, saying, "No, thank God, I am able to assist myself to any thing."

The following week, being worse, he consented to have medical advice. On the 17th of October he kept his bed during the day, for the first time since his childhood. He now desired his nephew to write from his dictation the manner in which he would have his property disposed of, mentioning his anxious wish to "send forth Evangelical Missionaries." The various objects to which he was desirous of contributing, were then taken down in writing, and the sums affixed to each according to his direction;

on their being read over to him he often said, " That is not enough ;" and this was repeated so many times, that he afterwards found diminution necessary, when his will came to be regularly made. " These are blessed institutions," said he, referring to the societies to which he made bequests.

Being afterwards in violent pain, he requested his nephew to procure some one to pray with him, and a pious neighbour was sent for. On his arrival, he asked what should be the subject of his petitions: " My dismissal from the body," said the sufferer. His friend expostulated with him, questioning the propriety of such a prayer, and adding in the language of St. Paul, " Perhaps your abiding in the flesh is more needful for us." Mann replied, that the apostle was a great and holy man, and could not be compared to himself. " Of what use," he continued, " can I be to myself, or others? I am now only a burden." His friend reasoned with him on the subject, and pointed out the duty of God's people in suffering, as well as in doing his will. No expression of impatience was afterwards heard. When questioned by this visitor, as to the state of his mind, he replied in the words of the apostle: " I find a law in my members, warring against the law in my mind. Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He then added, of his own accord; " None but Jesus, none but Jesus; my reliance is on Christ alone, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Many of his sayings, sometimes longing for stronger confidence in the Saviour,—always expressive of ardent love to him, and an eager desire for his appearing, were recorded by his nephew. Scripture now seemed quite familiar to him, and his quotations from its pages were very frequent. Once he exclaimed, " O, that blessed book! O, that men would take it for their guide!" Sometimes he was enabled to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Happening to say that he felt no pain, his nephew remarked, " That is a mercy." " Yes," said he, " I am made up of mercies, through no merit of my own." Being asked to take some wine, he said, " I have got the wine of the New Jerusalem—the wine of the consolation of Christ.—I, a poor, guilty, depraved creature—nothing but Christ and his salvation."

In the midst of acute pain, he exclaimed, "Lord, thy sufferings were great when thou criedst, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'—and in the agony of the garden, when thou saidst, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.'" In similar circumstances he said, "Thou knowest I have cried heartily in thy house for 'deliverance in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment;'—O, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the great, incomprehensible Jehovah, help my feeble frame! I am very weak;—but no—no wrath. O, it was a joyful sound of the angelic host. 'Glory to God in the highest.' Joy, joy, joy, in the presence of the angels."

Being desired to keep himself warm and comfortable, he said, "My comfort is in death, when I shall join the heavenly throng,

> "Then will I sing more sweet, more loud,
> And Christ shall be my song."

Many were the hymns and texts of Scripture which, in the intervals of pain, he quoted; unconnected as they were, they showed where his thoughts were fixed, and what was the prevailing tenour of his mind.

To a little girl who came to make inquiries, in the hope of seeing him, he said, "The fear of God is the guard of youth; O! give yourself up to him without reserve."

Though variously exercised, sometimes depressed by a deep sense of unworthiness, and by a natural dread of pain and of death, his mind appears to have been still fixed on spiritual things, and his whole conversation was either drawn from the oracles of truth, or related to his own religious feelings. Short petitions for the spread of the Gospel, for the good of others, for his own pardon and acceptance with God, were frequently uttered. They were occasionally indistinct, but always scriptural. "I can say the Lord's prayer from my heart," he once exclaimed; "Lord, let my will be dissolved in thine. I know that Jesus Christ has lived and died for me, and purchased my pardon with his most precious blood." At another time, "I desire to be where Mr. Newton wished to be—at the foot of the thief on the cross."—"The best of doings is worth nothing."—"My object has been to hate sin, and flee from it. I have hated it with a perfect

hatred." "I can say, with pious Job, 'Thy hand is heavy upon me, but thy comforts delight my soul."

Being told that one of the pocket-books for 1823 contained a portrait of the Rev. Thomas Scott, he mentioned the last time he had heard him preach; and then spoke of the late Rev. Mr. Foster, adding, "They are now before the throne,—O, that I was with them!"

He continued expressing himself in a similar manner, till he was reduced so low as to be unable to speak, and only capable of making signs. After remaining a short time in a state of extreme debility, he suddenly appeared to revive, recovered strength sufficient to take some nourishment, and was spared several weeks afterwards. The next day, while still very weak, his nephew, sitting by his bed-side, began humming the hundredth psalm, when the old man joined him, and recollected some verses which the nephew had forgotten. Afterwards he began, and they sung together, that beautiful hymn of Dr. Watts:

"When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride," &c.

This was the only time at which he was ever heard to sing, unless when joining in public worship.

Soon afterwards, one morning, when left alone, he was heard to fall. His nephew instantly repaired to him, and found that he had fallen on his side from his knees, through weakness. On being raised, he again requested to be left, in order to continue the private worship in which he was engaged.

Some hopes were now entertained of his recovery, pain having left him, and debility being his only remaining complaint. But his constitution had sustained a shock so severe, that the prospect was speedily relinquished. He was, however, again able to go down stairs; and, though extremely apprehensive of proving troublesome, he was at length prevailed on to allow himself to be removed to his nephew's house. There it was his custom to retire early to rest; but if, in order to lengthen his repose, his affectionate relative did not appear to assist him to rise in the morning so soon as he wished, he

would exert his remaining strength, and dress himself unaided. It was in vain to mention the debilitated state of his frame as a reason for self-indulgence; he seemed to think time as valuable, and as necessary to be fully occupied as ever. His usual equanimity of temper continued manifest; thankfulness was expressed for every trifling service he received; and he always aimed to give as little trouble, and cause as little inconvenience in the family as possible

This interval of convalescence appears to have been very mercifully appointed. During his first severe illness, his apprehension of continued bodily suffering seemed to exceed that which he was actually enduring; and great anxiety for a speedy dismissal from the body was evidenced. The sweet submission, holy composure, and perfect acquiescence in the will of God, which marked his whole behaviour subsequently to the last attack, showed that the season which had elapsed, of suspended suffering, and of comparative ease,—during which, though his debilitated frame rendered him quite aware of approaching dissolution, yet the cessation of actual pain enabled his vigorous mind fully to contemplate his situation on the verge of eternity,—was used to the utmost advantage; in acquiring, from the treasures of Scripture with which his memory was stored, and those which renewed prayer and meditation opened to his experience, that heavenly tranquillity which led the Psalmist to exclaim: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

He was one day much delighted at hearing an account of the conversion of the Islanders in the South Seas, exclaiming, "Now, is not that pleasing?"—and on information being communicated from another part of the world, in which the efforts for the spread of Christianity had been less successful, he said, emphatically, "If a man is dead in sin, nothing will awake him but the almighty power of Jehovah."

Speaking of himself one morning, in a cheerful manner, he applied to his own history two lines of Bunyan, which were certainly never more strikingly exemplified.

> "There was a man, whom some accounted mad
> The more he cast away the more he had."

" I am sure," said he, " I have found it so.

One night, after being assisted to bed, his nephew saying, " Good night, God bless you!" and observing the old man to reply only " Good night!" he asked the reason, and was answered, that as those words were generally spoken in a sense quite unmeaning, if not profane, he never used them.

His nephew had some years before been very desirous to possess his likeness; but Mann's modesty could not be overcome, and the object was given up. Now, however, when it became evident that the relative whom he had so long loved and revered was about to be removed from his sight, he resolved on making another effort. He therefore unexpectedly introduced an artist whom he knew, and using every argument he was master of, prevailed on his uncle to sit. Having once consented to do so, the old man showed the greatest patience, and although the fatigue in his weak state was considerable, he never complained, nor would ever shorten the sitting when it was proposed to do so on his own account. The artist came from a considerable distance, and of this he always seemed to think so much, as to lead him to forego all consideration of his own feelings. It was proposed that he should be represented leaning on his Bible; " for," said his nephew, " it has been your support through life." " No," said he, " that would seem as if I wished to appear more religious than other people." It was then agreed that he should be taken leaning on his stick; and, by his own desire, his dress was that which he commonly wore as attached to the Victualling Office. " If it is not soon finished," said he to the artist, " I shall die first." The portrait was completed within a week of his death. Its accuracy was acknowledged by all who saw it: and it has since been recognised by some who knew not the name of the original, and had only remarked his constant attendance and exemplary deportment at church. Disease had, it is true, made some alterations in his countenance; his cheeks having sunk in, his eyes appeared larger than before his illness; the painting also exhibited the pallid hue of approaching death; but this, of course, is not apparent in the engraving.

As he grew rapidly worse, his nephew proposed endeavouring to find Mr. Pratt, or Mr. Watkins, whose

ministry he had attended, and request one of them to visit him. "No," said he, "those good men have a great deal to do; they have a great number of good people in their parishes, who take up all their time." It was then proposed to send for the neighbour who had before visited him; but he said, very sweetly, "No: he cannot tell me more of the way of salvation than it has pleased the Lord to reveal to me:" adding, "My confidence is in Christ, he is all my salvation;—I have no hope from any other source I trust that Jesus Christ has bled and died for me." His weakness was now so very great as to prevent him from reading, or attending to any one who read to him.

On the 8th of December, symptoms appeared which indicated approaching dissolution. The kindly feelings of his heart were still vigorous. Some one present blamed his nephew for betraying his grief. "You do not know," said the old man, "what a strong affection there is between him and me." "You are not afraid of death," said the nephew. "O, no!" he exclaimed, repeating the words, "I am not afraid of death." His nephew calling him his only friend, he said, "Make God your friend."

The following Monday, as he was sitting by the fire he was seized with violent pain, and was overheard by those near him in earnest prayer. The severity of his sufferings extorting from him an exclamation, he afterwards observed, "Many Christians bear their pain without a sigh or groan. How they do it, I don't know. I am sure I do not cry out wilfully or wantonly; my pain forces it from me." He then said, "Lord, accept me, in and for the sake of the adorable Redeemer!" On something being mentioned concerning God's time, he said "Happy time!" This was a day of continued suffering, and after retiring to rest, he was overheard importuning his heavenly Father to pity and release him.

The next morning he rose without assistance, but in a short time returned to his bed. He did not then appear in much pain, but seemed reluctant to converse, and said he needed rest. In the course of the day, seeing his nephew with a book in his hand, he said, "Read your Bible, and pray for the light of God's Spirit upon it." Afterwards, being asked if he was happy, and if he relied on the great work wrought out on Calvary, he replied,

"No where else: God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ." One present, in allusion to the "Pilgrim's Progress," said, "Poor Christian had Hopeful to hold up his head while passing through the river; and you have a good hope." Yes," said he, "the love of God is shed abroad in my heart." Afterwards he added, "My strength is perfect weakness. Finish the work, Lord, and let me join thy heavenly host, to sing thy praises for ever and ever."

His faculties continued unimpaired, of which a instance occurred in his remembering a trifling circumstance referred to him for decision. He also gave directions concerning his funeral, that he should have but one coffin, although he had had two for his sister, and that he should be buried with her in St. Katharine's Church.

It was difficult to suppose his end so near as it proved. He seemed like a person taking comfortable repose after a long and fatiguing journey. In fact, his soul was already entering into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Being asked if his mind continued happy, he said, "Yes;" and to the question whether he suffered much pain, he replied, "No." This was his last word. He fell into a peaceful slumber, which lasted two hours, without any appearance of restlessness; and then calmly yielded up his soul into the hands of his faithful Creator, and merciful Redeemer.

Thus died Thomas Mann, on Wednesday, 11th December 1822, aged 75 years. His mortal remains were interred, according to his desire, by the side of those of his youngest sister, in the south aisle of the church of St. Katharine by the Tower.

Thomas Mann left £100. 3 per Cent. Annuities, to each of the following societies:—

The Bible Society; the Church, London, Baptist, and Home Missionary Societies; the Religious Tract Society; the Irish Evangelical Society; the Spitalfields Benevolent Society; and the London Female Penitentiary; also £50. in money, to the Tower Ward Charity-school; The Wesleyan Missionary Society; The Lying-in Society, Knight Ryder-street; the Charity-school, St. Katharine, Tower; and the Bethel Union.

Part of a Letter from a Waterman.

"I trust you will not think me taking too great a liberty, at my suggesting the undermentioned traits of character relating to your departed, but much esteemed uncle, Thomas Mann. During a period of 22 years, as a fellow-servant, I occasionally had an opportunity of noticing his conduct, which was strictly uniform and regular: his sobriety, his attention to time, were remarkable, particularly on occasions when we have been on duty in the barge.

"On a Trinity Monday, it was his practice never to leave the barge to drink beer with us; but he always preferred to have his lunch on board the barge, and stay till the return of the Trinity Corporation. Likewise, when we used to haul the barge up at Lambeth, he was desirous to take his leave of us with all despatch, anxious to return home, not even stopping to take a draught of porter with us, still preserving his natural bent of even-temperedness and good behaviour, such as commanded the esteem and good will of all his fellow-servants, although his habitual conduct was such a contrast to ours. On some occasions he has casually met me in the street, and in general the topic of his conversation seemed grounded with a firm, godly zeal in his good wishes for the welfare and salvation of the unenlightened part of society. It seemed his great care to admonish me to pay a due observance to the holy sabbath, and to stimulate me with charitable ideas in the cause of God and his Holy Gospel. His remarks on the subject of religion were far above my humble capacity to comprehend; still, I was grateful to him for his good intentions for my spiritual welfare.

"His frequent, though *hidden*, acts of charity to poor distressed individuals in the streets, as well as several weekly pensioners, who I have been informed attended on him, have excited in me the highest opinion of his humane conduct towards his suffering fellow-creatures.

"On one occasion particularly, I was an eye-witness to his charitable disposition. It was on a Sunday, after the morning service. A poor distressed woman was sitting on a step in Tower Street. I saw him turn back. He was just before speaking to me, as we walked along

He asked the poor woman a question privately, and then relieved her with money. He then rejoined me on Tower Hill with a seeming serene mind, not noticing to me what had passed.

" An individual I know, told me, that he was once directed to a shop to have a new jacket. I know your humane uncle was the donor. I have heard him hailed by many people concerned about the river, by the appellation of ' The Honest Waterman.'

" The limits of a sheet are too short to describe his virtues. Much more might be said. In short, he was an ornament to society in general, a pattern to all who profess Christianity, and an example to all watermen, as I am sorry too few of our class tread in his steps. Most who knew him for forty or fifty years speak of him as he merited, as an honest, upright man. If the above few little observations will be to you acceptable, in consideration of the high esteem and great respect I ever held him in during his life-time, they are much at your service."

Extract from another Letter of a Waterman.

" I must needs say something about so good a man, for he was a living epistle of the grace of God, known and read of all men. As a tree of the Lord's right hand planting, his top boughs of hope were in heaven, while his lower boughs of activity were filled with fruits of righteousness, suitable to his birth from heaven. He preferred the duties he owed to God, to the dangers he feared from man. He oft-times sought the poor before the poor sought him, although the sun of prosperity shone clear on his humility. He loved to see the pictures of purity hung in the frames of poverty. I have said he was a good man, and so he was, for he was bound in gospel cords to his good behaviour. He showed lenity to the faults of others, and had good sense to discern his own. He was not a self-righteous man, but a humble believer in the Son of God, and manifested his love to him by keeping his command ments; and by so doing, he was like a city built on a hill, that cannot be hid. He was the humble servant of the public, as well as the public servant of God. He walked with God in the path of duty, and God blessed

him, and made him a blessing. Is not the memory of such a man blessed?"

The history and character of the Honest Waterman suggest some important lessons. Perhaps the reader has been inquiring within himself, Whence did the various excellences of Thomas Mann's character arise? We reply, not from nature, not from education, but from divine grace. He was always willing to acknowledge that he was by nature one of the children of wrath, even as others; and he knew that no earthly power could raise those to spiritual life who are described in the Scriptures as "dead in trespasses and sins." Hence, turning from himself, and from all human dependence, he was led entirely to rest his hopes for pardon, peace, and holiness on the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Reader, here your trust must be placed, if you would have the God of Thomas Mann for your father and friend. You are sinful, helpless, and polluted in yourself; your only refuge from the wrath to come, is the atoning sacrifice of Christ: here rest and you are secure, but any other dependence will only deceive you and ruin your soul. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

Thomas Mann's diligence in improving the means of grace, shows an example well worthy of imitation. He did not make any excuses as to his hard labour in the days of work; or as to the large gain of watermen on the Sabbath, to justify the neglect of that holy day. Sensible of his need of divine instruction, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, he spent the Sabbath in the fear of the Lord, in gaining spiritual strength, and in raising his thoughts above the world, and fixing them on that unseen Saviour whom he loved, on whom he relied for the salvation of his soul, and whose name, whose house, and whose sabbaths, were dearer to his heart than all the pleasures and pursuits of the world. The observation of the Sabbath is a test of a man's character; the true Christian loves this day and loves its sacred services, and longs for a Sabbath that never will end; the hypocrite esteems its services to be drudgery, a feeling of slavish fear leads him to attend to some of its outward observances, but his heart is not engaged

and he says within himself, What a weariness it is! Reader, if the Sabbath and the worship of God be not your delight, if you do not long for communion with God, if you are not earnest in seeking spiritual blessings above all other things, be assured that you are yet in your sins, that your heart must be changed, that you must, as Christ declares, be "born again," before you can enter the kingdom of heaven. Be it then your earnest prayer, in dependence on the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and his promise to bestow the Holy Spirit on those that ask of him: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. (Psalm li. 11.) This "clean heart" and "right spirit" will lead you to prize the means of grace, according to the experience of the Psalmist, as related in the remainder of the 51st psalm.

The union of diligence in business with fervour of spirit, as marked in the conduct of Thomas Mann, is well deserving of the reader's imitation. It is observable that the Apostle reckons diligence in business as well as fervour of spirit to be "serving the Lord;" and while we pursue the appointed duties of our honest callings in life, in his fear, we do serve him. The true influence of the religion of Christ will be manifested in the daily engagements of life, and the Christian in the commonest concerns will set the Lord always before him: thus honest labour will become, in a sense, the means of grace, and whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he does, he will do all to the glory of God.

As the conclusion of this little work, let the reader ask if the religion of Thomas Mann be his religion. Is your faith, your hope, your life, like his? Have you felt the burden of sin, and found your own weakness? Have you sought the pardoning grace of Christ, and are you resting all your hopes on him? Are you living a life of faith on the Son of God, and of holy obedience to his commands? Is it for you to live Christ, and for you to die gain? Or, does conscience bear witness that you have neither part nor lot in these matters.—Yet there is hope for you; seek now the mercy of God through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; his blood cleanseth from all sin and he is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

Let the humble believer in Christ rejoice; and, as he

traces the effects of the grace of God in those who are partakers of like precious faith, let him anticipate the adoring songs of a better world, in which all the redeemed of the Lord will unite, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF THOMAS MANN

Blest is thy memory, Waterman lowly,
Though to the grave thou art gone for a while
Yet thy spirit is now with the pure and the holy,
Enjoying thy Saviour's ineffable smile.

Blest is thy memory! kind and engaging,
Him didst thou follow, who, dwelling be ow,
Mental and bodily sorrow assuaging,
Lessened the load of mortality's woe.

Fully his love and salvation thou knowest,
Words full of bliss he hath spoken to thee,
"Inasmuch as thou didst to the meanest and lowest
Those deeds of compassion, thou didst them to me."

To the haven of rest thou art peacefully gathered
No more shall the elements buffet thy form;
Death's final tempest triumphantly weathered,
Moor'd is thy bark from the reach of the storm.

The anchor of hope, which thou trustedst so surely,
Hath yielded thee all it was formed to fulfil?
The Word, on whose truth thou reliedst securely,
Thy solace and guide, hath redeemed thee from ill.

Afar from the wordling's contempt and derision,
No longer his vanity troubles thy mind;
Time and its mysteries clear'd to thy vision,
Doubt and misgiving thy soul hath resigned.

Apprehension the latest and faintest is over,
Life and its cares like a dream have passed by;
And thou 'mid my gloomiest days canst discover,
That the hand of thy merciful Father was nigh.

His worship, on earth, to thy spirit was pleasant,
His glory, below, was thy constant delight
And now to thy soul they are evermore present
Where faith is transformed to the rapture of sight.

And if, unassumingly faithful, thy story,
One trophy of grace to thy Saviour should raise;
O will it not heighten the bliss of thy glory,
And tune with new transport thy anthem of praise!

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No. 17.

THE LIFE

OF

COL. JAMES GARDINER.

COLONEL JAMES GARDINER was the son of Captain Patrick Gardiner, who served many years in the armies of King William and Queen Anne, and died abroad with the British forces in Germany.

The Colonel's mother was a lady of very excellent character; but it pleased God to exercise her with uncommon trials; for she lost not only her husband and her brother in the service of their country, but also her eldest son, Mr. R. Gardiner, on the day which completed his sixteenth year, at the siege of Namur, in 1695. But God blessed these afflictions as the means of forming her to an eminent degree of piety.

The second son, the subject of this Memoir, was born in Linlithgowshire, Jan. 10, 1687-8, the memorable year of the glorious Revolution, in defence of which his own life was eventually sacrificed.

In early life, his mother took care to instruct him with great tenderness and affection in the principles of true Christianity. While at the school at Linlithgow, he made a considerable progress in literature.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799;
DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER-ROW

In the younger part of his life the good effects of his mother's prudent and exemplary care were not so conspicuous as she hoped; yet there is great reason to believe they were not entirely lost. Could she have prevailed, he would not have thought of a military life; but it suited his taste; and the ardour of his spirit, animated by the persuasions of a friend, who greatly urged it, was not to be restrained. Nor will the reader wonder at this, when he knows that this lively youth fought three duels before he attained the stature of a man; in one of which, when but eight years old, he received from a boy, much older than himself, a wound in the right cheek, the scar of which was always very apparent. This false sense of honour might seem excusable in those unripened years, and considering the profession of his father; but he often mentioned it with regret. And after his conversion, he declined accepting a challenge, with this truly great reply, which in a man of his experienced bravery was exceedingly to be admired, "I fear sinning," said he, "though you know I do not fear fighting."

He served as a cadet very early: and at fourteen years old, he bore an ensign's commission in a Scotch regiment in the Dutch service; in which he continued till 1702, when he received an ensign's commission from Queen Anne, which he bore in the battle of Ramilies, in his nineteenth year.

On this occasion, our young officer was commanded on what seemed almost a desperate service, to dispossess the French of the church yard at Ramilies, where a considerable number of them were posted to remarkable advantage. They succeeded better than was expected, and Mr. G. was glad of such an opportunity of signalizing himself. Accordingly, he had planted his colours on an advanced ground, and while he was calling to the men (probably in that horrid language which is so peculiar a disgrace to our soldiery) he received a shot in his

mouth, which, without beating out any of his teeth, or touching the forepart of his tongue, went through his neck. Not feeling at first the pain of the stroke he wondered what was become of the ball, and in the wildness of his surprise began to suspect he had swallowed it; but dropping soon after, he traced the passage of it by his finger, when he could discover it no other way.

This accident happened about five or six in the evening, on the 23d of May, in the year 1706; and the army pursuing its advantages against the French, without regarding the wounded, our young officer lay all night in the field, agitated, as may well be supposed, with a great variety of thoughts. When he reflected upon the circumstances of his wound, that a ball should, as he then conceived it, go through his head without killing him, he thought God had preserved him by a miracle; and therefore assuredly concluded, that he should live, abandoned and desperate as his condition then seemed. Yet had he little thought of humbling himself before God, and returning to Him after the wanderings of a life licentiously begun. But, expecting to recover, his mind was taken up with contrivances to secure his gold, of which he had nearly twenty pistoles about him; and he had recourse to a very odd expedient. Expecting to be stripped, he took out a handful of clotted gore, of which he was frequently obliged to clear his mouth; and putting it into his left hand, he took out the money, and shutting his hand, besmeared the back of it with blood; in this position he kept it till the blood so dried, that his hand could not easily fall open.

In the morning, the French, who were masters of that spot, though defeated at some distance, came to plunder the slain, and seeing him to appearance almost expiring, one of them was just applying a sword to his breast to destroy the little remainder of life; when, in the critical moment, a cordelier, who

attended them, interposed, taking him by his dress for a Frenchman, and said, "Do not kill the poor child." Our young soldier heard all that passed, though he was not able to speak one word; and opening his eyes made a sign for something to drink. They gave him a sup of some spirituous liquor, which happened to be at hand; from which he said he derived a more sensible refreshment than he could remember from any thing he had tasted either before or since. Then, asking, by signs, the friar to lean down his ear to his mouth, he employed the first efforts of his feeble breath in telling him (what, alas! was a contrived falsehood) that he was nephew to the governor of Huy, a neutral town in the neighbourhood, and that, if they could convey him thither, he did not doubt but his uncle would liberally reward them. He had indeed a friend there, but the relationship was pretended. However, on hearing this, they laid him on a sort of hand-barrow, and sent him with a file of musketeers towards the place; but the men lost their way, and got into a wood towards the evening, in which they were obliged to continue all night. The poor patient's wound being still undressed, it is not to be wondered at, that by this time it raged violently. The anguish of it engaged him earnestly to beg that they would either kill him outright, or leave him there to die, without the torture of any other motion; and indeed they were obliged to rest for a considerable time on account of their own weariness. Thus he spent the second night in the open air, without any thing more than a common bandage to stanch the blood; and he often mentioned it as a most astonishing providence, that he did not bleed to death.

Judging it quite unsafe to attempt carrying him to Huy, whence they were now several miles distant, his convoy took him early in the morning to a convent in the neighbourhood; where he was hospitably received, and treated with great kindness and tender

ness. But the cure of his wound was committed to an ignorant barber-surgeon, who lived near the house. The tent which this artist applied, was almost like a peg driven into the wound; yet, by the blessing of God, he recovered in a few months. The lady abbess, who called him her son treated him with the affection and care of a mother. He received a great many devout admonitions from the ladies there, and they would fain have persuaded him to acknowledge so miraculous a deliverance, by embracing the *Catholic Faith*, as they were pleased to call it. But, though no religion lay near his heart, he had too much the spirit of a gentleman, lightly to change that form of religion which he wore loose about him.

When his liberty was regained by an exchange of prisoners, and his health established, he was far from rendering to the Lord according to the mercy he had experienced. Very little is known of the particulars of those wild and thoughtless years which lay between the nineteenth and thirtieth of his life; except that he experienced the divine goodness in preserving him in several hot military actions; and yet these years were spent in an entire alienation from God, and an eager pursuit of sensual pleasure as his supreme good.

Amidst all these wanderings from religion, virtue, and happiness, he approved himself so well in his military character, that he was made a lieutenant in 1708; and, after several intermediate promotions, appointed major of a regiment commanded by the Earl of Stair. In January, 1729-30, he was advanced to the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the same regiment: and here continued till April, 1743; when he received a colonel's commission over a regiment of dragoons; and at the head of which he valiantly fell about two years and a half after he received it.

We now return to that period of his life which passed at Paris, where he resided in the family of the

Earl of Stair, with some interruptions, till about the year 1720.

The Earl's favour and generosity made him easy in his affairs, though he was part of the time out of commission, the regiment to which he belonged being disbanded. This was, in all probability, the gayest part of his life, and the most criminal. Whatever good examples he might find in the family where he lived, it is certain that the French court was one of the most dissolute under heaven. What, by a wretched abuse of language, have been called intrigues of love and gallantry, constituted, if not the whole business, at least the whole pleasure of his life: his fine constitution, than which, perhaps, there was hardly ever a better, gave him great opportunities of indulging himself in those excesses; and his good spirits enabled him to pursue his pleasures in such a manner, that multitudes envied him, and called him, by a dreadful kind of compliment, "The happy rake."

Yet the checks of conscience, and some remaining principles of so good an education, would break in upon his most licentious hours; and when some of his dissolute companions were once congratulating him upon his felicity, a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself, "O that I were that dog!" Such was then his happiness, and such perhaps is that of hundreds more, who bear themselves highest in the contempt of religion, and glory in that infamous servitude, which they affect to call liberty.

Yet in the most abandoned days, he was never fond of intemperate drinking, from which he used to think a manly pride might be sufficient to preserve persons of sense and spirit; so that if he ever fell into any excesses of that kind, it was merely out of complaisance. His frank, obliging, and generous temper, procured him many friends; and those principles, which rendered him amiable to others, not

being under the direction of wisdom and piety sometimes made him more uneasy to himself than he perhaps might have been if he could entirely have outgrown them, especially as he was never a confirmed sceptic, but still retained a secret apprehension, that natural and revealed religion was founded in truth. With this conviction, his notorious violation of the most essential precepts of both, could not but occasion some secret misgivings of heart.

His continual neglect of the great Author of his being, to whom he knew himself to be under daily and perpetual obligations, gave him, in some moments of involuntary reflection, inexpressible remorse; and this, at times, wrought upon him to such a degree, that he resolved he would attempt to pay Him some acknowledgments. Accordingly, for a few mornings he did it; repeating in retirement some passages out of the Psalms, and other Scriptures, which he still retained in his memory; and owning, in a few strong words, the many mercies and deliverances he had received, and the ill-returns he had made for them.

But these strains were too devout to continue long in a heart as yet unsanctified: for how readily soever he could repeat such acknowledgments of the divine power and goodness, and confess his own follies and faults, he was stopt short by the remonstrances of his conscience, as to the flagrant absurdity of confessing sins he did not desire to forsake, and of pretending to praise God for his mercies, when he did not endeavour to live to his service. A model of devotion, where such sentiments made no part, his good sense could not digest; and the use of such language before a heart-searching God merely as a hypocritical form, while the sentiments of his soul were contrary to it, appeared to him such daring profaneness, that, irregular as the state of his mind was, the thought of it struck him with horror. He therefore determined to make no more attempts of this sort: and was one of the first that deliberately laid

aside prayer, from some sense of God's omniscience and some natural principle of honour and conscience.

These secret debates with himself and ineffectual efforts would sometimes return: but they were overborne, again and again, by the force of temptation: and it is no wonder, that in consequence of them his heart grew still harder Neither was it softened, or awakened, by the very memorable deliverances, which at this time he received. Once he was in extreme danger by a fall from his horse. As he was riding fast down a hill, the horse threw him over his head, and pitched over him; so that when he rose, the beast lay beyond him, and almost dead. Yet, though he received not the least harm, it made no serious impression on his mind. In his return from England in the packet-boat, but a few weeks after the former accident, a violent storm, that drove them up to Harwich, tossed them from thence for several hours, in a dark night, on the coast of Holland; and brought them into such extremity, that the captain of the vessel urged him to go to prayers immediately if he ever intended to do it at all; for he concluded they would in a few minutes be at the bottom of the sea. In these circumstances he did pray, and that very fervently too; and it was remarkable, that while he was crying to God for deliverance, the wind fell, and quickly after they arrived at Calais. But the major was so little affected with what had befallen him, that, when some of his gay friends, on hearing the story, rallied him upon the efficacy of his prayers, he excused himself from the scandal of being thought much in earnest, by saying, "that it was at midnight, an hour when his good mother and aunt were asleep; or else he should have left that part of the business to them."

We now come to the account of his conversion. This memorable event happened towards the middle of July, 1719. The major had spent the evening (which was the Sabbath) in some gay company, and

had an unhappy assignation with a married lady, whom he was to attend exactly at twelve. The company broke up about eleven; and he went into his chamber to kill the tedious hour. It happened that he took up a religious book, (which his good mother or aunt had, without his knowledge, slipped into his portmanteau,) called, "The Christian Soldier; or Heaven taken by Storm:" written by Mr. Thomas Watson. Guessing, by the title, that he should find some phrases of his own profession spiritualized, in a manner which might afford him some diversion, he resolved to dip into it, but took no serious notice of any thing he read; and yet while this book was in his hand, an impression was made upon his mind (perhaps God only knows how) which drew after it a train of the most important and happy consequences.

Suddenly he thought he saw an unusual blaze of light fall on the book, while he was reading, which he at first imagined might have happened by some accident in the candle. But lifting up his eyes, he apprehended to his extreme amazement, that there was before him, as it were suspended in the air, a visible representation of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, surrounded with a glory; and was impressed as if a voice, or something equivalent to a voice, had come to him to this effect: "Oh, sinner, did I suffer this for thee, and are these the returns?" But whether this were an audible voice, or only a strong impression on his mind equally striking, he did not seem confident, though he judged it to be the former. Struck with so amazing a phenomenon, there remained hardly any life in him, so that he sank down in the arm-chair in which he sat, and continued, (he knew not exactly how long) insensible, and when he opened his eyes saw nothing more than usual.

It may be easily supposed he was in no condition to make any observation upon the time during which he remained insensible; nor did he throughout all the remainder of the night once recollect that criminal

assignation which had before engrossed all his thoughts. He arose in a tumult of passions not to be conceived, and walked to and fro in his chamber, till he was ready to drop down, in unutterable astonishment and agony of heart; appearing to himself the vilest monster in the creation of God, who had all his lifetime been crucifying Christ afresh by his sins, and now saw, as he assuredly believed, by a miraculous vision, the horror of what he had done. With this was connected such a view both of the majesty and goodness of God as caused him to loathe and abhor himself, and to "repent as in dust and ashes." He immediately gave judgment against himself that he was worthy of eternal damnation; was astonished that he had not been immediately struck dead in the midst of his wickedness; and, (which deserves particular remark,) though he assuredly believed that he should ere long be in hell, and settled it as a point with himself for some months, that the wisdom and justice of God did most necessarily require that such an enormous sinner should be made an example of everlasting vengeance, and a spectacle, as such, both to angels and men, so that he hardly durst presume to pray for pardon; yet what he then suffered, was not so much from the fear of hell, though he concluded it must soon be his portion, as from a sense of that horrible ingratitude he had shown to the God of his life, and to that blessed Redeemer who had been, in so affecting a manner, set forth as crucified before him.

In this view it may naturally be inferred, that he passed the remainder of the night waking; and he could get but little rest in several that followed. His mind was continually taken up in reflecting on the divine purity and goodness; the grace which had been proposed to him in the gospel, and which he had rejected; the singular advantages he had enjoyed and abused; and the many favours of providence he had received; particularly in rescuing him from so many imminent dangers of death; which he now saw must

have been attended with such dreadful and hopeless destruction. The privileges of his education, which he had so much despised, lay with an almost insupportable weight on his mind; and the folly of that career of sinful pleasure, which he had so many years been running with desperate eagerness, filled him with indignation against himself, and against the great deceiver, by whom (to use his own phrase) he had been "so wretchedly and scandalously befooled."

The mind of major Gardiner continued from this remarkable time, rather more than three months, (but especially the two first of them,) in as extraordinary a situation as one can well imagine. He knew nothing of the joys arising from a sense of pardon; but, on the contrary, for the greater part of that time, and with very short intervals of hope towards the end of it, took it for granted, that he must, in all probability, quickly perish. Nevertheless, he had such a sense of the evil of sin, the goodness of the Divine Being, and of the admirable tendency of the Christian Revelation, that he resolved to spend the remainder of his life, while God continued him out of hell, in as rational and useful a manner as he could; and to continue casting himself at the feet of Divine Mercy every day and *often* in a day, if peradventure there might be hope of pardon, of which all that he could say was, that he did not absolutely despair. He had at that time such a sense of the degeneracy of his own heart, that he hardly durst form any determinate resolution against sin, or pretend to engage himself by any vow in the presense of God; but was continually crying to him, that he would deliver him from the bondage of corruption. He perceived within himself a most surprising alteration with regard to the dispositions of his heart; so that though he felt little of the delight of religious duties, he extremely desired opportunities of being engaged in them; and those licentious pleasures, which had before been his heaven, were now absolutely his aversion; and he was grieved to see

human nature, even in those to whom he was a stranger, prostituted to such low and contemptible pur suits. He therefore exerted his natural courage in a new kind of combat, and became an open advocate for religion, in all its principles, so far as he was acquainted with them, and all its precepts, relating to sobriety, righteousness, and godliness. Yet he was very desirous and cautious, that he might not run into an extreme; and made it one of his first petitions to God, the very day after these amazing impressions had been wrought in his mind, that he might not be suffered to behave with such an affected strictness and preciseness, as would lead others about him into mistaken notions of religion, and expose it to reproach or suspicion, as if it were an unlovely or uncomfortable thing. For this reason, he endeavoured to appear as cheerful in conversation as he conscientiously could; though in spite of all his precautions, some traces of that deep inward sense which he had of his guilt and misery would at times appear. He made no secret of it, however, that his views were entirely changed, though he concealed the particular circumstances attending that change. He told his most intimate companions freely, that he had reflected on the course of life in which he had so long joined them, and found it to be folly and madness, unworthy a rational creature, and much more unworthy persons calling themselves Christians. And he set up his standard, upon all occasions, against infidelity and vice, as determinately as ever he planted his colours in the field. There was at that time in Paris a certain lady who had imbibed the principles of Deism, and valued herself much upon being an avowed advocate for them. The major, with his usual frankness, (though with that politeness which was habitual to him,) answered like a man who perfectly saw through the fallacy of her arguments, and was grieved to the heart for her delusion. On this she challenged him to debate the matter at large, and to fix upon

a day for that purpose, when he should dine with her, attended with any clergyman he might choose. A sense of duty would not allow him to decline this challenge: and yet he had no sooner accepted it than he was thrown into great perplexity and distress, lest being only a Christian of six weeks old, he should prejudice so good a cause, by his unskilful manner of defending it. However, he sought his refuge in earnest and repeated prayers to God, that he would graciously enable him, on this occasion, to vindicate his truths in a manner which might carry conviction along with it. He then endeavoured to marshal the arguments in his own mind, as well as he could; and apprehending that he could not speak with so much freedom before a number of persons, especially before such whose province he might in that case seem to invade, he waited on the lady alone upon the day appointed.

The major opened the conference with a view of such arguments of the Christian religion as he had digested in his own mind, to prove that the apostles were not mistaken themselves, and that they could not have intended to impose upon us, in the accounts they give of the grand facts they attest; with the truth of which facts that of the Christian religion is most apparently connected. And it was a great encouragement to him to find, that, unaccustomed as he was to discourses of this nature, he had an unusual command both of thought and expression; so that he recollected and uttered every thing as he could have wished. The lady heard with attention, till he had finished his design, and waited for her reply. She then produced some of her objections, which he canvassed in such a manner, that at length she burst out into tears, allowed the force of his arguments and replies, and appeared, for some time after, so deeply impressed with the conversation, that it was observed by several of her friends: and there is reason to believe that the impression continued, at

least so far as to prevent her from ever appearing under the character of an unbeliever or a sceptic. This is only one, among many of the battles he was almost daily called out to fight in the cause of religion and virtue. The continued railleries with which he was received, in almost all companies where he had been most familiar before, did often distress him beyond measure; so that he declared, he would much rather have marched up to a battery of the enemy's cannon than have been obliged, so continually as he was, to face such artillery as this. But, like a brave soldier in the first action wherein he is engaged, he continued resolute, though shuddering at the terror of the assault; and quickly overcame those impressions, which it is not, perhaps, in nature wholly to avoid. In a word, he went on, as every Christian by divine grace may do, till he turned ridicule and opposition into respect and veneration.

Within about two months after his first memorable change he began to perceive some secret dawnings of more cheerful hope—that, vile as he then saw himself to be, he might nevertheless obtain mercy through a Redeemer; and at length about the end of October, 1719, he found all the burden of his mind taken off at once by the powerful impression of that memorable scripture upon his mind; (Rom. iii. 25, 26.) "Whom God hath set forth for a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins—that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

He had used to imagine, that the justice of God required the damnation of so enormous a sinner, as he saw himself to be; but now he was made deeply sensible, that the divine justice might be not only vindicated but glorified, in saving him by the blood of Jesus, even that blood which cleanseth from all sin. He was led to see the riches of redeeming love and grace, in such a manner as not only engaged him, with the utmost pleasure and confidence,

to venture his soul upon them; but even swallowed up (as it were) his whole heart in the returns of love, which, from that blessed time, became the genuine and delightful principle of obedience, and animated him, with an enlarged heart, to run the ways of God's commandments. Thus God was pleased (as he himself used to speak) in an hour to turn his captivity. All the terrors of his former state were turned into unutterable joy. And though the first ecstasies of it afterwards subsided into a more calm and composed delight; yet were the impressions so deep and so permanent, that he declared, on the word of a Christian and a friend, wonderful as it might seem, that, for about seven years after this, he enjoyed nearly a heaven upon earth. His soul was almost continually filled with a sense of the love of God in Christ; so that from the time of his waking in the morning, his heart was rising to God, and triumphing in him; and these thoughts attended him through all the day, till he lay down on his bed again, and a short interval of sleep (for it was but a very short one that he allowed himself) invigorated his animal powers for renewing those thoughts with greater intenseness and sensibility.

A life any thing like this, could not be entered upon, in the midst of such company as he was obliged to keep, without great opposition. He, however, early began a practice, which to the last day of his life he retained, of reproving vice and profaneness; and was never afraid to debate the matter with any, under the consciousness of such superiority in the goodness of his cause.

A remarkable instance of this happened about the middle of the year 1720, on his first return to make any considerable abode in England, after his remarkable change. He had heard on the other side of the water, that it was currently reported among his companions at home, that he was stark mad: a report at which no reader who knows the wisdom

of the world in these matters will be much surprised. He hence concluded that he should have many battles to fight, and was willing to despatch the business as fast as he could. And, therefore, being to spend a few days at the country-house of a person of distinguished rank, with whom he had been very intimate, he begged the favour of him that he would contrive matters so, that a day or two after he came down, several of their former gay companions might meet at his Lordship's table; that he might have an opportunity of making his apology to them, and acquainting them with the nature and reasons of his change. It was accordingly agreed to; and a pretty large company met on the day appointed, with previous notice that major Gardiner would be there. A good deal of raillery passed at dinner, to which the major made very little answer. But when the cloth was taken away, and the servants had retired, he begged their patience for a few minutes and then plainly and seriously told them what notions he entertained of virtue and religion, and on what considerations he had absolutely determined, that, by the grace of God, he would make these things the care and business of his life, whatever he might lose by it, and whatever censure and contempt he might incur. He well knew how improper it was, in such company, to relate the extraordinary manner in which he was awakened; which they would probably have interpreted as a proof of lunacy, notwithstanding all the gravity and solidity of his discourse; but he contented himself with such a rational defence of a righteous, sober and godly life, as he knew none of them could with any shadow of reason contest. He then challenged them to propose any thing they could urge to prove that a life of irreligion and debauchery was preferable to the fear, love, and worship of the eternal God, and a conduct agreeable to the precepts of his gospel. And he failed not to bear his testimony from his own

experience, (to one part of which many of them had been witnesses,) that after having run the round of sensual pleasure, with all the advantages the best constitution and spirits could give him, he had never tasted any thing deserving to be called happiness, till he made religion his refuge and delight. He testified, calmly and boldly, the habitual serenity and peace, that he now felt in his own breast, and the composure and pleasure with which he looked forward to objects, which the gayest sinner must acknowledge to be equally unavoidable and dreadful.

Upon this, the master of the table, a person of very frank and candid disposition, cut short the debate by saying, "Come let us call another cause; we thought this man mad, and he is in good earnest proving that we are so." On the whole, this well-judged circumstance saved him a good deal of further trouble. When his former acquaintances observed that he was still conversable and innocently cheerful, and that he was immovable in his resolution, they desisted from further importunity. And he declared, that, instead of losing one valuable friend by this change in his character, he found himself much more esteemed and regarded by many, who could not persuade themselves to imitate his example.

Nothing remarkable appeared in the Colonel's life from this period till the year 1726, when he married the Lady Frances Erskine, daughter to the Earl of Buchan, by whom he had thirteen children, five of whom survived their father.

Before the close of these short memoirs, it may not be improper, or without its use, to give the reader a sketch of the character of this excellent man, with reference to his particular relative situations; in some or other of which the reader may certainly find a model worthy of his imitation.

To view him first in the calmness of domestic life, and at the head of his affectionate family, it will naturally be supposed, that as soon as he had a house,

he erected an altar in it; that the word of God was read there, and prayers and praises constantly offered These were not to be omitted on account of any guest; for he esteemed it a part of due respect to those that remained under his roof, to take it for granted, they would look upon it as a very bad compliment, to imagine they would have been obliged by his neglecting the duties of religion on their account. As his family increased, he had a minister statedly resident in his house, who discharged the offices of tutor and chaplain, and was always treated with kindness and respect. He was constant in his attendance on public worship, in which an exemplary care was taken that the children and servants might accompany the heads of the family.

The necessity of being so many months together distant from home, hindered him from many of those condescending labours in cultivating the minds of his children in early life, which to a soul so benevolent, so wise, and so zealous would undoubtedly have afforded a very exquisite pleasure: but when he was with them, he failed not to instruct and admonish them; and the constant deep sense with which he spoke of divine things, and the real unaffected indifference which he always showed for what this vain world is most ready to admire, were daily lessons of wisdom and of piety. It was easy to perceive, that the openings of genius in the young branches of his family gave him great delight, and that he had a secret ambition to see them excel in what they undertook. Yet he was very jealous over his heart, lest he should be too fondly attached to them, and was an eminent proficient in the blessed science of resignation to the divine will.

To consider his character in the domestic relation of a master, it is proper to remark, that as his habitual meekness and command of his passions prevented indecent sallies of ungovernable anger towards those in a state of subjection to him, so the natural

greatness of his mind made him solicitous to render their inferior stations as easy as he could: he had also such a sense of the dignity and worth of an immortal soul, as engaged him to give his servants frequent religious exhortations and instructions.

To consider him in his military character, his bravery was as remarkable in the field of battle, as his milder virtues in the domestic circle: and he was particularly careful to prevent the various duties of religion and his profession from interfering with one another either in himself or others. He therefore abhorred every thing that should look like a contrivance to keep the soldiers employed about their horses and their arms at the season of public worship: far from that, he used to have them drawn up just before it began, and from the parade they went off to the house of God; where they behaved with as much reverence, gravity, and decorum, during the time of divine service, as any of their fellow-worshippers.

That this remarkable care to maintain good discipline among them might be the more effectual, he made himself on all occasions accessible to them, and expressed a great concern for their interest, temporal as well as spiritual; yet he had all the firmness requisite to the infliction of punishment, where he judged it necessary.

We may notice one instance of his conduct which happened at Leicester. While part of his regiment was encamped in that neighbourhood, the Colonel went *incognito* to the camp in the middle of the night; for sometimes he lodged at his quarters in the town. One of the sentinels had abandoned his post, and, on being seized, broke out into some oaths and profane execrations against those that discovered him—a crime of which the Colonel had the greatest abhorrence, and on which he never failed to animadvert. The man afterwards appeared much ashamed and concerned for what he had done, but

the Colonel ordered him to be brought up early the next morning to his own quarters, where he had prepared a piquet, on which he appointed him a private sort of penance; and while he was put upon it, he discoursed with him seriously and tenderly upon the evils and aggravations of his fault; admonishing him of the divine displeasure which he had incurred; and then urged him to argue upon the pain which he then felt, how infinitely more dreadful it must be to 'fall into the hands of the living God," and to meet the terrors of that damnation which he had been accustomed impiously to call upon himself and his companions. The result of this proceeding was, that the offender accepted his punishment, not only with submission, but with thankfulness; and spoke of it some years after in such a manner that there seemed reason to hope it had been instrumental in producing a change in his heart, as well as in his life.

Indeed, this excellent officer always expressed the greatest reverence of the name of the blessed God; and endeavoured to suppress, and, if possible to extirpate that detestable sin of swearing and cursing, which is every where so common, and especially among our military men. He often declared his sentiments with respect to this enormity at the head of the regiment, and urged his captains and their subalterns to take the greatest care that they did not give the sanction of their example to that, which by their office they were obliged to punish in others. His zeal on these occasions wrought in a very active, and sometimes in a remarkably successful manner, among not only his equals, but his superiors too.

Nor was his character less conspicuous than his zeal. The lively and tender feelings of his heart engaged him to dispense his bounties with a liberal hand: and above all, his sincere and ardent love to the Lord Jesus Christ, led him to feel, with a true sympathy, the concerns of his poor members. In

consequence of this he honoured several of his friends with commissions for the relief of the poor; and esteemed it an honour which Providence conferred upon him, that he should be made the Lord's almoner for the relief of such.

That heroic contempt of death which had often discovered itself in the midst of former dangers, was manifested now in his discourse with several of his most intimate friends. And as he had in former years often expressed a desire, "that if it were the will of God, he might have some honourable call to sacrifice his life in defence of religion and the liberties of his country:" so, when it appeared to him most probable that he might be called to it immediately, he met the summons with the greatest readiness. This appears from a letter which he wrote only eight days before his death: "The rebels," says he, "are advancing to cross the Firth, but I trust in the Almighty God, who doeth whatsoever he pleaseth in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth."

These sentiments wrought in him to the last in the most effectual manner. But he was ordered to march as fast as possible to Dunbar; and that hasty retreat, in concurrence with the news which they soon after received of the surrender of Edinburgh to the rebels, struck a visible panic into both the regiments of dragoons. This affected the Colonel so much, that, on Thursday before the fatal action at Preston-pans, he intimated to an officer of considerable rank, that he expected the event would be as in fact it proved; and to a person who visited him, he said, "I cannot influence the conduct of others as I could wish, but I have one life to sacrifice to my country's safety, and I shall not spare it."

On Friday, Sept. 20, 1745, (the day before the battle which transmitted him to his immortal crown,) when the whole army was drawn up about noon, the Colonel rode through all the ranks of his own

regiment, addressing them at once in the most respectful and animating manner, both as soldiers and as Christians, to engage them to exert themselves courageously in the service of their country, and to neglect nothing that might have a tendency to prepare them for whatever event might happen. They seemed much affected with the address, and expressed a very ardent desire of attacking the enemy immediately—a desire in which he and another gallant officer of distinguished character would gladly have gratified them, if it had been in the power of either; but they were overruled; and he spent the remainder of the day in making as good a disposition as circumstances would allow.

He continued all night under arms, wrapped up in his cloak, and sheltered under a rick of barley which happened to be in the field. About three in the morning he called his domestic servants to him, of whom there were four in waiting. He dismissed three of them with most affectionate Christian advice, and such solemn charges relative to the performance of their duty, and care of their souls, as seemed plainly to intimate that he apprehended, at least very probably, he was taking his last farewell of them. There is great reason to believe that he spent the little remainder of time, which could not be much above an hour, in those devout exercises of soul, which had so long been habitual to him. The army was alarmed at break of day by a noise of the rebels' approach, and the attack was made before sunrise. As soon as the enemy came within gun-shot, they commenced a furious fire; and the dragoons, which constituted the left wing, immediately fled. The Colonel, at the beginning of the attack, which in the whole lasted but a few minutes, received a bullet in his left breast, which made him give a sudden spring in his saddle; upon which his servant, who had led the horse, would have persuaded him to retreat; but he said it was only a wound in the flesh, and fought

on, though he presently received a shot in the right thigh. The Colonel was, for a few moments, supported by his men, and particularly about fifteen dragoons, who stood by him to the last. But after a faint fire, the regiment in general was seized with a panic; and though the Colonel and some gallant officers did what they could to rally them once or twice, they at last took a precipitate flight. Just in the moment when Colonel Gardiner seemed to be making a pause, to deliberate what duty required him to do in such a circumstance, he saw a party of the foot who were then bravely fighting near him, but had no officer to head them; upon which he rode up to them immediately, and cried out aloud, "Fire on, my lads, and fear nothing." But just as the words were out of his mouth, a Highlander advanced to him with a scythe fastened to a long pole, with which he gave him such a deep wound on his right arm, that his sword dropped out of his hand; and at the same time, several others coming about him while he was thus dreadfully entangled with that cruel weapon, he was dragged from off his horse. The moment he fell another Highlander gave him a stroke, either with a broadsword, or a Lochaber axe, on the head, which was the mortal blow. All that his faithful attendant saw further at this time was, that as his hat was falling off, he took it in his left hand, and waved it as a signal to him to retreat, adding, (which were the last words he ever heard him speak,) "Take care of yourself:" upon which the servant immediately fled to a mill, at the distance of about two miles from the spot on which the Colonel fell; where he changed his dress, and, disguised like a miller's servant, returned with a cart about two hours after the engagement. The hurry of the action was then pretty well over, and he found his much-honoured master not only plundered of his watch and other things of value, but also stripped of his upper garments and boots, yet still breathing

and adds, that though he was not capable of speech, yet, on taking him up, he opened his eyes, which makes it something questionable whether he were altogether insensible. In this condition, and in this manner, he conveyed him to the church of Tranent, whence he was immediately taken into the minister's house and laid in a bed; where he continued breathing till about eleven in the forenoon, when he took his final leave of pain and sorrow. His remains were interred the Tuesday following, Sept. 24, at the parish church of Tranent (where he had usually attended divine service) with great solemnity.

When God reveal'd his gracious name,
And chang'd my mournful state,
My rapture seem'd a pleasing dream,
The grace appear'd so great.

The world beheld the glorious change,
And did thy hand confess;
My tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sang surprising grace.

"Great is the work," my neighbours cried,
And owned the power divine;
"Great is the work," my heart replied,
"And be the glory thine."

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No. 105.

THE

COTTAGE WEDDING;

WITH

THE HISTORY

OF

SARAH AND WILLIAM.

IN TWO PARTS.

See page 10.

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THE

COTTAGE WEDDING

PART I.

"I DON'T half like to think that you won't be with us here to-morrow;" said old Jacobs to his daughter, as he came in from his work, and was hanging up his tools; "I don't half like it, girl; the tears start into my eyes when I think this is the last day, and then comes the parting."

"But I'll come and see you very soon, father;" said Sarah; "Shan't we, William?" turning to a young man who sat by her, and whose looks were full of honesty and kindness: "shan't we often come and see father and mother? Why, there won't be above three miles between the two houses, and we can come over of a summer's evening, when work is done, or any odd time. Now, father, don't you vex and fret yourself, for I am sure William will be so kind to me, that I shall see mother and you again very soon." William joined in cheering up the old people, and assured them that Sarah should come and see them as often as ever she could be spared.

"Aye, I know you are a kind-hearted lad," said Jacobs; "you should not have our Sally here, if you was not; she deserves a good husband; and though I say it, as should not say it, she will make a good wife; for I'll be bound for it, there never was a better daughter than she has been to us."

"That was the very thing made me first take a liking to her," said William; "I saw how she minded about making you and her mother comfort-

able and happy; and how proper she behaved herself at church, and how constant she was in going; and then, I never saw her dressed out in pink ribbons, and fine bonnets and things, like many girls as I see about here; so all this put together made me think that she'd make a good wife; and with the blessing of God, a good wife I'm sure she *will* make."

"I hope I shall," said Sarah; "but you are very right to say 'with the blessing of God,' for I am sure, without it, I cannot do any thing right; and if I had not thought that you would help me to grow better, and put me in mind of my duties, if ever I should appear to forget them, I hope I should never have said, I would marry you."

"Well, to hear you both talk after this fashion, makes one's heart comfortable," said the father. "What a pity it is you were not both of you here three Sundays ago; it was when you were down at your aunt's, Sally; we had *such* a sermon! It was about marriage; and you might have heard all that you are bounden to do for each other, and to bear from each other, and how you ought to think and feel in your hearts and minds on the day you are married, and all your life through! Ah! if I could but remember, as I used to do when I was young, I might tell you all he said, and it would do you a power of good to hear it; though I can't say, but you seem to know what you are about; still I've a notion we can never know too well. Aye, he's a true good gentleman, our minister; it does one's heart good to hear him preach, and to see how he lives; I am sure I bless God for sending him among us, every day of my life. Can't you remember what he said on that other Sunday, mistress? (turning to his wife;) tell it to these young ones; mayhap the minister at Merryfield may not speak to their hearts like our's; and if he does, he may not happen to say any thing about this particular, as concerns 'em just now; why you was a

talking to me about it only yesterday, as I may say, and I'll be bound you can tell 'em a good deal of it."

"It was a nice sermon, to be sure," said Dame Jacobs, (who had been listening to all that passed with pleasure,) "and I wished for our Sarah and William to hear it, as well as you; I know in the first beginning of it, Mr. Smith said, What a solemn and serious thing it was to be married, and that folks ought to be very careful how they choose a partner for life. The main thing, he said, was, that both the husband and wife should have the fear of God in their hearts; and if they tried in all their actions to please him, they might be much surer of being happy, and pleasing one another, than they ever could be, if they did not. I am sure, for my part, I have many a time seen wives that were at first well behaved, led into sin by the wickedness of their husbands, and husbands driven to the ale-house by the bad conduct of their wives at home."

"Well, William," said Sarah, "I will keep *your* house so neat, you shall like it better than any in the place; and I know I shall be so happy to see you, when you come home of an evening, that if you liked an ale-house ever so, you could not have the heart to leave me."

"Leave *you*, my dear Sarah? Why, I would not for the world: how nice it will be when I come in from work, to find you in the house, looking kind and cheerful upon me! Dear Sarah, how I love to think of it: and then we may sit down together so comfortable; and when you are sewing and stitching, I can read a bit of a chapter, or one of those nice little tracts that I have got; so we shall be as happy (shan't we, Sarah?) as happy as ever we can be here, please God we live."

"I think we shall," said Sarah, (and a tear of thankfulness stood in her eye;) "and I hope you will never have cause to repent of your choice, for I am sure I never shall of mine."

"I might tell a good piece more of the sermon."

said Dame Jacobs; "but I've got a little book here that I bought at the door t'other day, that will tell you all you're to do better than I can; so while Sarah is making her new gown, and I'm putting the last hand to this here bonnet for her, William might read it out to us—What d'ye all think of it?" They said they should like it very much; so when the candle was snuffed, and the chairs drawn close to their little oak table, William began

THE BOOK.

"If you have ever read the second chapter of Genesis, you will know, my good reader, that it was the merciful and gracious God (who preserves all things, and who knows what is good for his creatures) that ordained the state of matrimony. 'The Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone, I will make a help-meet for him: and the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he woman, and brought her unto the man; and Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.'

"Our blessed Saviour showed that *he* looked upon marriage as an honourable estate; for if you read the second chapter of St. John, you will see that the first miracle he wrought was at a marriage-feast in Cana of Galilee.

"Since, then, God himself ordained this state, and since our blessed Saviour saw fit to honour it with his first miracle, surely it must deserve to be seriously considered by those who wish to enter into it. As the soul of man is that part of him which is

of the greatest consequence, because it will last for ever, whereas the body dies, and will turn to corruption, he should, when he means to marry, pray to God to direct his choice, and then seek for a partner who is likely to help him to grow better and better; one who fears God and keeps his commandments, and who, if he should have a family, would bring them up with religious principles. A woman who is really pious will regard all her duties to God and man. The Scripture says of a virtuous woman, (Prov. xxxi. 11.) 'The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

12. "'She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

13. "'She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

19. "'She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

26. "'She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her lips is the law of kindness.

27. "'She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

28. "'Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praiseth her.

30. "'Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.'

"A woman should be just as particular in the character of the person *she* marries: she must not choose *him* for her husband, who only tells her she is to his mind, and that he likes her; or, whom she thinks good-natured, because he gives her ribbons, and knots for her cap; she must see that he does his duty in whatever station he is placed. It is not enough that he *talks* about religion; if he is *really* religious it will be seen by all he does; it will govern his temper, his words, and his actions; he will never be seen unnecessarily at an ale-house, or in bad company, or idling away his time: such a man

Mr. Smith; but they thought that was a stronger reason still, for taking pains with their children themselves. By the time their children were eight years old, they could say their catechism, and understand many parts of it. Their father and mother did all in their power also to explain what they taught them; and it was a nice sight to see them all together of a Sunday evening; for sometimes the father would read part of an easy chapter to them; at other times he would hear them their catechism, and then, by breaking it into smaller questions and answers, he would explain it. I have known him make the bigger ones tell him what they could remember of the sermon; for he always made all his family go to church on a Sunday.

It was pleasant to observe how the children improved, and how fond they were of asking questions of their father and mother about what they heard at church and at home. Even little Ruth, the youngest girl, who was about seven years old, would often put a very apt question. She said to her mother one day, as she was walking from church with her, "Did you hear, mother, that Mr. Brown read the very same to-day, that we read to father last Sunday? I knew it again as soon as ever I heard it." "Yes, I noticed it," she replied; "and I'm glad to find that you remember what you read, or hear; for we might as well never read at all, if we don't mind it at the time, and think of it afterwards. Every body ought to be very thankful for being taught to read, and to try to make a good use of what they learn. Your father and I thank God upon our knees, (often's the time,) that we can read his will in the Bible, and can teach our dear children what they must do to please him."

"I like to hear you and father tell us about that," said Phœbe, the eldest girl; "I always think you seem so comfortable like, when you talk about going to heaven, and about pleasing God."

"It does make us very comfortable, dear," said

the mother; "and is it not enough to make us so, to think that we should go to a place, where there is no sorrow at all, and where we shall see the good God who gives us all our blessings in this world? Did not you see how happy poor old Hannah seemed, when she talked of her hope of soon being with God, and beholding his glory? Poor old creature! It's now near fourteen years she has been suffering as you saw t'other day, and I never yet heard a complaint come out of her mouth."

"But, mother, it seems such a very long way to go to heaven; I wonder what can make poor Hannah so sure that she shall go there and be happy," said little Ruth.

"Because the Bible assures her that she will; and as to its being a great way off, does not your catechism teach you, that God is *Almighty?*"—"Yes, mother. And what does that mean?"—"That he can do every thing."—"Well, then, you see if God Almighty can do every thing, he can take us to heaven when he pleases."—"What must happen to every body, Phœbe, before they can go either to heaven or hell."—"They must die."—"What is dying?"—"Why, I believe, mother, you told us it was the soul leaving the body."—"You are very right, my dear."—"Well," said Ruth, "I think I know why Hannah is so sure she shall go to heaven; it is because she is such a good woman."

"You are not quite right, Ruth," said Mrs. Kirby; "but, perhaps, you could not fully understand me, if I told you all about that yet."—"But I am a good deal older than Ruth or Phœbe either," said Stephen, who had walked close behind, and had been listening to them all the time, though he had not spoken. "You know, mother, I'm more than ten, and I should so like to know, and I think I could understand, if you would tell me."

"The thing is," said Mrs. Kirby, "that no person in the world is good enough to deserve to go to heaven, because there is no person who has passed his

whole life without doing many a wrong and sinful thing; even if we suffer a bad thought to stay in our minds, we are unworthy to be with God, who is always good, and pure, and holy."

"Yes, I remember now, you told us this before," said Stephen; "it was at the time you read to us about Adam and Eve's eating the forbidden fruit—did not you, mother?"

"Yes, my dear; *they* brought sin and death into the world; and since that time all mankind have been sinners. Phœbe, you can tell what sin means?" "Yes, I know our little book at home says, It is the breaking of God's law." "When people commit sin what do they deserve?"—"To be punished."—"Certainly they do. If you remember what I read to you about Adam and Eve, perhaps you can tell me, how God said *they* should be punished, if they did what he commanded them not to do; God said they should die. By this death, the Almighty meant not only that the body should die, but that the soul should go to hell. Do you think, then, that if Adam deserved to die, he could possibly be fit to go to heaven?"—"I don't think he could."—"Neither then can any person in the world; for the apostle says, 'There is *none* righteous, no not one; (Rom. iii. 10.) 'For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' (Rom. iii. 23.) Even poor Hannah herself, whose life has been passed in trying to follow the commands of God, would tell you, as she has often told me, that, in his sight, she feels she is but a poor sinner, and unworthy of his favour; that she has often left undone many things that she ought to have done, and done many things that she ought not to have done, and that she is very unworthy of going to heaven. 'If eternal death is the punishment of sin, you and I deserve it, my dear Sally,' she would say to me, 'for our unholy natures; and our having broken the righteous law of God in thought, word, and deed, make us deserving of God's anger, and unfit to appear in his

presence, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.' "

"Oh, dear mother," said Stephen, "I think this is enough to make all of us very unhappy; how can we ever hope to go to heaven, then?"

"It would be enough to make us very unhappy as you say, if we had nothing to depend upon but our own goodness; for then we should none of us go to that happy place; but you shall see how very merciful God is to us, and how much reason we have to thank and praise him. He sent his own Son Jesus Christ into the world, to suffer and die for our sins. *He* was innocent, holy and just. *He* is the Son of God and the Son of Man; and the only Mediator between God and Man. And God has graciously declared, that whosoever believeth in him shall be saved, be made holy, and go to heaven. Now to be saved in God's own way, you must repent of your sins, and confess them before him, and ask pardon for them. You must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and obey him as your Lord and King. And as you have a sinful heart, and cannot do these things of yourself, you must pray to God through Jesus Christ, to give you his Holy Spirit to renew your heart to holiness, and to help you to do his will. These truths your catechism teaches you, and they are taken from the Bible, as you have often heard your father read them. 'Repent, and believe the Gospel.' (Mark i. 15.) 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' (Acts xvi. 31.) 'We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; all our sufficiency is of God.' (2 Cor. iii. 5.) 'Your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to those who ask him.'" (Luke xi. 13.)

"How very good it is of God," said Stephen, "to show us how sinful we are, and to tell us how we may be pardoned; to send his Son into the world to save us and to promise his Holy Spirit to make us holy and happy! Now I understand why poor old Han

nah is so comfo. table, for I am sure she believes in our Saviour; I have often heard her say so; but then I did not know what it meant, as I do now. Mother, I hope you will read us something more about it in the Bible this evening."

"To be sure I will; but remember my dear children, I beseech you, that all the reading in the world can be of no use, unless you pray for God's blessing upon it, that it may take deep root in your hearts, and govern your lives."

This was the way these good people took to make religion pleasant to their children, and to instruct them in it to the best of their power.

They were particular also, in teaching them all the lesser duties of life; and you might see, by their respectful conduct to their parents and to their superiors, by their orderly behaviour and civil manner, that they had been well taught. Great care was taken to keep them out of bad company; and whenever they went with their mother to pick up a little corn in the fields, she always kept them within sight, as she was afraid they might learn bad words; for I am sorry to say, that swearing is become a common practice, even among children.

Whenever they were in the wrong, their parents corrected them; and it was only for serious faults, such as lying, stubbornness, or determined disobedience, that they scolded, or spake harshly to them.

The girls could mend their clothes, and make the house tidy, at a very early age; and the boys were all taught to knit. I have even known the eldest boy, George, set a patch upon the elbow of his own coat, when his mother was busy washing, and his sisters were either mending for themselves or the little ones, rather than go ragged to church.

You may easily believe that this was a happy family; and if those who read of them would follow their example, *they* would be happy too.

William and Sarah Kirby had the comfort of seeing all their children grown up to gain an honest liveli-

hood: some of them married, and others were servants in orderly, respectable families. They lived to a good old age; and when they died, it was with the hope of being received into heaven, for the sake of their divine Redeemer.

Blest are the sons of peace,
Whose hearts and hopes are one;
Whose kind designs to serve and please,
Through all their actions run!

Blest is the pious house,
Where zeal and friendship meet!
Their songs of praise, their mingled vows,
Make their communion sweet

Thus, on the heavenly hills,
The saints are blest above;
Where joy, like morning dew, distils,
And all the air is love.

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POOR JOSEPH.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE

See page 2.

A POOR half-witted man named Joseph, whose employment was to go on errands, and carry parcels, passing through London streets one day, heard psalm-singing in the house of God: he went into it, having a large parcel of yarn hanging over his shoulders; it was Dr. Calamy's church, St. Mary's, Aldermanbury. A very well-dressed audience surrounded the Doctor. He read his text from 1 Tim. i. 15.—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." From this he preached, in the clearest manner, the ancient and apostolic gospel, the contents of this faithful saying, namely, that there is eternal salvation for the vilest sinners, solely through the worthiness of Jesus Christ, the God that made all things. "Not many rich, not many noble, are called by this doctrine," says the apostle; "but God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty."

While the elegant part of the congregation, perhaps, listlessly heard this doctrine, and, if they were struck with

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any thing, it might be only with some brilliant expression, or well-turned period, Joseph, in rags, gazing with astonishment, never took his eyes from the preacher, but drank in with eagerness all he said, and trudging homeward, he was heard thus muttering to himself; "Joseph never heard this before; Christ Jesus, the God who made all things, came into the world to save sinners like Joseph: and this is true: and it is a 'faithful saying.'" Not long after this, Joseph was seized with a fever, and was dangerously ill. As he tossed upon his bed, his constant language was, "Joseph is the chief of sinners; but Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and Joseph loves him for this." His neighbours who came to see him, wondered on hearing him always dwell on this, and only this. Some of the religious sort addressed him in the following manner:—"But what say you of your own heart, Joseph? Is there no token for good about it? No saving change there? Have you closed with Christ, by acting faith upon him?" "Ah, no," said he, "Joseph can act nothing—Joseph has nothing to say for himself, but that he is the chief of sinners; yet seeing that it is a faithful saying, that Jesus, He who made all things, came into the world to save sinners, why may not Joseph, after all, be saved?"

One man, finding out where he heard this doctrine, on which he dwelt uniformly and with so much delight, went and asked Dr. Calamy to come and visit him. He came, but Joseph was now very weak, and had not spoken for some time, and though told of the Doctor's arrival, he took no notice of him; but when the Doctor began to speak to him as soon as he heard the sound of his voice, he instantly sprang upon his elbows, and seizing him by his hands, exclaimed as loud as he could, with his now feeble and trembling voice, "O, sir! you are the friend of the Lord Jesus, whom I heard speak so well of him. Joseph is the chief of sinners; but it is a faithful saying, that Jesus Christ, the God who made all things, came into the world to save sinners, and why not Joseph? O pray to that Jesus for me, pray that he may save me: tell him, that Joseph thinks that he loves him for coming into the world to save such sinners as Joseph." The Doctor prayed: when he concluded, Joseph thanked him most kindly; he then put his hand under his pillow, and took out an old rag, in which were tied up five guineas, and putting it into the Doctor's

hand, (which he had kept all this while close in his,) he thus addressed him· " Joseph, in his folly, had laid this up to keep him in his old age, but Joseph will never see old age; take it, and divide it amongst the poor friends of the Lord Jesus ; and tell them that Joseph gave it them for His sake who came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is the chief." So saying, he reclined his head. His xertions in talking had been too much for him, so that he instantly expired.

Dr. Calamy left this scene, but not without shedding tears over Joseph: and used to tell this little story with much feeling, as one of the most affecting occurrences he ever met with. It naturally suggests the following observations:

1. Let us notice the foundation of Joseph's belief. It was the great truth, that the only Saviour of sinners is "God manifest in the flesh," which affected his heart and supported his confidence. Indeed, when a sinner is properly humbled under a sense of his sins, he will feel convinced that none but a Divine and Almighty Redeemer can possibly save him; hence his trembling heart will turn to Christ, as " God over all blessed for ever;" and, viewing the infinite value of his sacrifice on the cross, will believe and rejoice in Him with " joy unspeakable, and full of glory." On this firm foundation, the soul of the penitent will rest secure, because " his blood cleanseth from all sin ;" " he ever lives to make intercession" for those who believe on him, and they " shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of his hands."

2. The gospel produces love to God and his people Joseph had received the word not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, and it wrought effectually on his believing it. He manifested that a saving change had been wrought in his heart, of which he gave no small evidence, in admitting that Joseph had nothing to say of himself. He experienced the truth of the apostle's assertion, " We love him because he first loved us."—" O pray," said he, " to that Jesus for me ; pray that he may save me! tell him that Joseph thinks that he loves him for coming into the world to save such poor sinners as Joseph." Whatever may be said about loving God for what he is in himself, it was a sense of the love of Christ manifested in saving sinners, that first attracted his attention, drew forth his warmest affections, and occupied all his thoughts. Thus

it is with every sinner saved by sovereign grace. A sense of the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit infallibly produces love; and this is shown by universal obedience to the will of God, and studying to adorn the doctrine of God by a life and conversation becoming the gospel. Joseph could not now manifest his love to God in this way, but he does it by showing love to his people, and that because they were the friends of Jesus. When he heard Dr. Calamy's voice, he exclaimed, "O, sir, you are the friend of the Lord Jesus, whom I heard speak so well of him, and whom I love for what you said of him;" and to this profession of love he added a substantial proof, in giving to the poor friends of Jesus all he possessed in the world.

3. The gospel is sufficient to support the mind in the immediate prospect of death. Joseph did not comfort himself with the thought that he was no worse than his neighbours, and therefore, as God was merciful, he would be safe enough. The atonement of Christ was the only and exclusive ground of his hope and confidence in the view of death, judgment, and eternity. Being justified by faith, he had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God.

Death is a subject of the greatest importance. It is appointed unto men once to die, but after death the judgment. Think of this, ye that forget God, and put far from you the thought of death. Remember that your breath is in your nostrils; perhaps this night your soul may be required of you, and what then would be your situation? Be entreated then to consider your ways, and flee for refuge to the hope set before you in the gospel. It still remains "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," even the "chief;" "neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," Acts iv. 12. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31.

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THE

AGED CHRISTIAN IN THE HOSPITAL.

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

ON going to visit a parishioner then in the County Infirmary, within some miles of which I reside, I was informed that, in an adjoining ward, there lay a very good old man, confined by a mortification in his foot, who would be pleased with any christian conversation which my time would allow me to afford him.

The nurse conducted me into a room, where I found him alone on a bed. The character of his countenance was venerable, cheerful, and contented. His hoary hairs proclaimed him to be aged, although the liveliness in his eye was equal to that of the most vigorous youth. "How are you, my friend?" said I. "Very well, sir, very well. Never better in all my life. Thank God for all his mercies:" replied the man with such a cheerful tone of voice, as at once surprised and delighted me. "Very well! How so? I thought, from what I heard, that you were in much pain and weakness." "Yes, sir, that is true: but I am very well for all that. For God is very good to my soul; and he provides every thing needful for my body. The people in the house are very kind; and friends come to see me, and talk and pray with me, sir; I want nothing, but more grace, to praise the Lord for all his goodness." "Why, my friend, you are an old pilgrim, and I am glad to see that you have learned thankfulness, as you travel through the wilderness." "Thankfulness!" quickly returned he; "no, sir, I never did thank the Lord, I never could thank him; I never shall thank him, as I ought, till I get to glory. And then—oh then—how I will thank him for what he has done for me." Tears of affection filled his eyes as he spoke. "What a good Master you serve!" I added. "Ay, sir, if the servant were but as good as the Master! but here I am a poor old sinner, deserving nothing, and receiving every thing which I need. Sir, I want nothing, but more grace to serve him better. I lie here on this bed, and pray and sing by night and day. Sir,

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you must let me sing you my hymn ; I always begin it about four o'clock in the morning, and it keeps my spirits alive all the day through." Without waiting for my reply, he raised himself up, and in an aged and broken, but very affecting tone of voice, he sang two or three verses, expressive of God's goodness to him, and his own desire to live to God's glory. The simplicity, serenity, and heartfelt consolation, with which this venerable disciple went through it, left an impression on my mind which it would be impossible to convey to the reader.

As soon as he had finished his hymn, he said, " Do not be offended, sir, at my boldness ; you love the Lord, too, I hope ; and I am sure you won't be angry to hear me praise him. But now, sir, talk to me about Jesus Christ. You are his minister, and he has sent you here to-day to see a poor unworthy soul, that does not deserve the least of his mercies. Talk to me, sir, if you please, about Jesus Christ." " Neither you, nor I, are able to talk of him as we ought," I answered ; " and yet if we were to hold our peace, the very stones would cry out." " Ay, and well they might, sir, cry shame, shame upon us, if we refused to speak of his goodness ;" said the old man. " Jesus Christ," I continued, " is a sure refuge, and a present help in time of trouble." " That's right, sir, so he is." " Jesus Christ has taken care of you, and watched over you all the days of your life, and he will be your guide and portion in death." " That's right again, sir, so he will." " You have committed your soul into his keeping long since, have you not ?" " Above forty years ago, sir ; above forty years ago he came to seek and to save me, a vile sinner, who deserved nothing but his wrath. I can never praise him enough." " Well, my friend, and this very Saviour Jesus Christ, whom you love, and in whom you trust, lived for you and died for you ; he rose again for you, and he has sanctified you by his Holy Spirit, and now lives to make daily intercession for you, and having done all this, do you think he will leave you to perish at last ?" " No, sir," said the old man, " faithful is he that hath promised, and he will do it. Mine, alas, is a changing heart, but he changeth not. I believe that he hath laid up a crown of glory for me ; and though the old enemy of souls sometimes tells me I shan't have it, I believe in Christ sooner than in him, and I trust I shall have it at

last." "And do you not find by experience," I added, "that his yoke is easy and his burden light? His commandments are not grievous, are they?" "No, sir, no: it is a man's meat and drink, if he loves the Lord, to do what he bids him." "Where were you before you came into this infirmary?" "In the parish workhouse at——." "Have you a wife?" "She died some years since, and got to her heavenly home before me." "Have you any children?" "Yes, sir, I have two sons married, and settled in the world with families. One of them has been here to see me lately, and I hope he is in a good way for his own soul, and brings up his children in the fear of God." "Have you any worldly cares upon your mind?" "Not one, sir; I am come to this house, I plainly see, to end my days; for this mortification in my leg must, before very long, bring me to the grave. And I am quite willing sir, to go, or wait the Lord's own time. I want nothing, sir, but more grace to praise him." The last words he often repeated in the course of the conversation.

"You have reason," I said, "to feel thankful that there is such a house as this, for poor and sick people to be brought to, both for food, lodging, and medicine." "That I have, indeed, sir; it is a house of mercies to me, and I am ashamed to hear how unthankfully many of the patients express themselves for the benefits which the Lord provides for them here. But, poor creatures, they neither know nor love him! The Lord have mercy upon them, and show them the right way! I should never have known that good way, sir, if he had not taken compassion upon me, when I had none upon myself." Tears ran down his aged cheeks as he spoke these last words. Here, thought I, is a poor man that is very rich, and a weak man that is very strong.

At this time the nurse brought in his dinner. He said, "There, sir, you see more and more mercies. The Lord takes care of me, and sends me plenty of food for this poor old worn-out body." "And yet," said I, "that poor old worn-out body will one day be renewed and become a glorified body, and live along with your soul in the presence of God for ever." "That's right," said the good old man, "so it will; 'though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,' Job xix. 26. But come, sir," seeing me look at my watch, "you must

speak a word *to* your Master, if you please, as well as *for* him. I will put down my dinner, while you pray with me." I did so, the old man often adding his confirmation of what I offered up, by voice, gesture, and a countenance highly expressive of the agreement of his heart with the language of the prayer.

Having ended, he said, "God be with you, sir, and bless your labours to many poor souls: I hope you will come to see me again, if my life be spared. I am so glad to see those who will talk to me about Jesus Christ, and his precious salvation." I replied, "May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who carried them through the days of their pilgrimage, and brought them safe to a city which hath foundations, bring you there too, and bless you all the remaining days of your journey till you get home. I am going to see several serious friends this evening, who would be glad, I know, to receive a message from one who has had so much experience of a Saviour's mercies. What shall I say to them?" "Tell them, sir, with my christian love and respects, that you have been to see a poor dying old man, who wants nothing at all in this world, but more grace to praise the Lord with." So ended our first interview.

I could not help reflecting, as I returned homewards, that as the object of my journey to the infirmary had been to carry instruction and consolation myself to the poor and sick; so a poor and sick man was made instrumental to the conveying of both instruction and consolation to my own heart in a very superior degree. I saw him four or five times afterwards, and always found him in the same happy, patient, thankful, and edifying state of mind and conversation. The last time I was with him, he said, "Sir, I long to be at my heavenly home, but I am willing to remain a traveller as long as my Lord and Master sees good."

He died not long after my last sight of him, in the stedfast assurance of faith in Christ, and with a hope full of immortality.

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THE

LIFE OF WILLIAM KELLY

OR,

THE HAPPY CHRISTIAN.

BY THE LATE REV. HUGH STOWELL,

RECTOR OF BALLAUGH, ISLE OF MAN.

WILLIAM KELLY was born at Douglas, in Isle of Man, in the year 1731. He was descend from poor, but honest parents, who resided in the par of Kirk Bradden, on the south side of the island. At parochial school he received so much learning as to able to read the holy Scriptures. His mother took so pains with his religious education, and gave him the b instructions in her power. Her labour was not altoget in vain; for he took great pleasure, at a very early per of his life, in attending public worship. At a proper he was put apprentice to a tailor; and having finished

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apprenticeship he travelled through several parts of England for improvement in his trade.

On his return to his native place, he discovered strong marks of growing vanity; and both his dress and behaviour betrayed uncommon levity of mind and pride of heart. He now frequented the company of idle and dissolute young men, and soon learnt their vices, and imitated their manners. To supply his expenses, which began to exceed the gains of his trade, he commenced fisherman, and soon distinguished himself by his diligence and activity on board the herring-boat, and still more by his clamour and noise at the public-house. He proceeded from one degree of intemperance to another, till at last he became an habitual drunkard. Before he arrived at this "excess of riot," he had many struggles with himself, and felt the horrors of an accusing conscience, and the shame of a degraded man. Of this part of his life he never spoke, after his conversion, but with bitter remorse, and the liveliest acknowledgments of the goodness of God in not cutting him off while he was running in so desperate a course. After forming repeated plans of reformation; after resolving, and re-resolving, to quit the haunts of drunkenness, he still continued a slave to his appetite, and a dupe to his vile companions. His extravagance, at length, arose to such a height, that his credit was totally gone. One day, being unable to satisfy the demand on him at the public-house, the landlady seized his hat as security for the payment of the debt, and he was obliged to hurry home bare-headed, grieved, ashamed, and mortified. This circumstance had a powerful effect on his mind. He began in earnest to consider his ways as a sinner against God; like the prodigal son, "he came to himself," repenting of his sins, and earnestly desiring to forsake them; but, having experienced the insufficiency of his former resolutions, which were made in his own strength, and being fully convinced that "all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works," proceed from God, he prostrated himself before the throne of grace; he earnestly sought help from above; with a "broken and contrite heart" he applied to Jesus, the Saviour of sinners; and, with an entire reliance on the merits, and an absolute dependence on the grace of this compassionate Saviour, he

solemnly and deliberately determined to "break off h sins," and enter on a new life. This resolution, forme in the Divine strength, he was enabled, by the blesse Spirit, who suggested it, inviolably to keep; and fro that period, which was about the thirtieth year of hi life, to the end of his days, a term more than forty year he never tasted beer, ale, or any spirituous liquor. Hi first step after his conversion, was to abandon his forme dissolute companions. Though frequently and importu nately solicited to accompany them, as usual, to thei riotous meetings, he could never once be prevailed on t violate the solemn resolution which he had formed. H now applied himself diligently to the labours of his trad and was soon enabled to discharge the debts which h had contracted by his former extravagance. Often di he mention the seizure and releasing of his hat, and hi grateful acknowledgments to the merciless landlad whom he always regarded, under Providence, as highl instrumental in his conversion. The change which wa wrought by Divine grace, in his views and sentiment produced a corresponding change in his life and conver sation. He became a new man; his manners, his habit his pleasures, and his employments, were changed. Th hours which he formerly spent in the public-house, wer now spent in retirement, and he was frequent and earnes in secret prayer.

While his hands were engaged in honest labou his heart was ascending to heaven in prayer and praise Many a solitary hour did he beguile with "psalm and hymns, and spiritual songs." He applied himsel with earnestness and constancy to the reading of th holy Scriptures. This was his favourite employmen and recreation. He committed large portions of Scriptur to memory, particularly the preceptive and practical parts These formed the continual subjects of his thought They were inscribed on the tablets of his memory, an wrought in the very frame of his mind; so that the were always present to his view, whispering to him "This is the way, walk ye in it," Isa. xxx. 21. H also found great profit and delight in reading books o practical religion, which he borrowed from all his religiou acquaintance who were in possession of any treasure of this kind As a compensation for the perusal o

the book, and a mark of his esteem for its contents, he was in the habit of mending and repairing every lea. and back which stood in need of repair. His acquaintance with several of our best divines had contributed much to give him just and correct views of religion. Horneck and Beveridge were his favourite authors. With the writings of the latter, particularly his "Resolutions," he was so well acquainted, that, upon hearing him quote the sentiments of this excellent writer, one might imagine he had long been in habits of intimacy with the bishop, or had lived in his family for many years.

He applied himself with extraordinary diligence to the study of the Manks language, and his proficiency was so great, that he was employed as a teacher by several persons who wished to obtain a knowledge of it. In this capacity the writer of this narrative first became acquainted with him; and with gratitude he acknowledges the many scriptural lessons which he has received from him, the many pleasing and profitable hours which he has spent in his soceity, and the lively impression which the example of this venerable man has left on his mind, of the power of Divine grace, to make the profligate pious, the unlearned wise, and the poor happy. Several of the clergy of this island have similar obligations to their Manks tutor, and retain a peculiar respect and regard for his memory. His manners were so gentle, his conversation so cheerful, and his whole behaviour so mild and courteous, that his company was highly grateful to all who had the least savour of piety in themselves; and even those whose spirit and temper were most contrary to his own, were constrained to acknowledge that his conduct discovered how earnestly he pursued "whatsoever things are lovely and of good report." During the latter years of his life, he was subject to rheumatic pains, and a complaint in his back, which disabled him from following his trade, except at short intervals. The small earnings of his former days, on which he was now compelled to draw, afforded but a scanty subsistence. On this trifling pittance, however, he lived contentedly, thankfully, and cheerfully. So far was he from murmuring or repining, that he was continually uttering the language of praise and thanksgiving to the God of his mercies. He kept the bright side of everything in view.

When others were complaining of the times, or th weather, or the crops, he would still find out some reason for thankfulness in those very subjects of complaint and would remark, in his favourite phrase, that "Al is from himself,"—meaning from the Giver of all good A grateful cheerfulness was the prevailing temper of hi mind; he had a constant regard to that passage of Scrip ture, "Giving thanks always for all things;" and o every occasion he supported the character of a truly happ christian.

To an intimate friend he once gave the followin account of his domestic economy and his daily expenses His general diet (he said) was bread and water. Occa sionally he bought a pennyworth of milk, which he con sidered as a great luxury; and sometimes he indulge himself with a herring, which his hostess dressed fo him; but he seldom or never could go to the expense o butcher's meat. For the garret in which he lived he pai five shillings yearly. He made it an invariable rule neve to get any article without paying for it, in conformity t the precept of Scripture, "Owe no man anything, bu to love one another." In this manner did he pass severa years of his life, during which it may, with the strictes truth, be asserted, that his whole expense did not amoun to five pounds in the year. As he approached nearer hi end, he walked silently and thoughtfully along the shor of eternity, and became still more spiritual and heavenl in his conversation. For nearly the last two years of hi life, when his little funds began to be exhausted, and h was utterly unable to recruit them, it pleased that goo Providence, who never leaves nor forsakes those wh trust in him, to open a door of relief for his faithfu servant. The exemplary piety of this happy christian introduced him to the acquaintance of a lady who had lon been confined by a painful distemper, which terminate in her death. During her tedious confinement she foun peculiar consolation from the visits of this christia friend, and often spoke of the benefit which she derive from his scriptural and edifying discourse. Her friend ship procured him many temporal comforts, which h always regarded as coming immediately from God, and fo which he abounded in thanksgiving. About this time when his wants were, probably, very pressing, though

he was never heard to utter a complaint, one of his young friends, who had long regarded him with peculiar esteem and affection, obtained for him a monthly subscription of sixteen shillings; and on inquiring whether this would be a sufficient supply, the old man, with gratitude beaming from his eye, declared that he did not know what he should do with so much money. The event proved that this was, indeed, too large a sum for him to expend on himself; for, as the friend who procured it afterwards discovered, he made it serve three other families. In his visits, also, to sick and indigent persons, he was in the habit of imparting such pecuniary relief as, considering his ability, appears almost incredible.

His little library formed the principal part of his property: this consisted of the Bible in Manks and English, Bishop Wilson's Exposition of the Catechism, the Christian Monitor, The Minister's Advice to his Parishioners, Evans's Meditations, and Orton's Sermons on Eternity, which was one of his favourite books. He had formerly possessed "Bishop Kidder's Advice to Young Men," but some person had stolen it from him; and he ever after lamented the loss of that book as one of the heaviest calamities of his life. The few books in his collection he had read and read again, but especially the Scriptures, which were his constant nourishment, his comfort under every affliction, the continual subject of his meditations, the favourite theme of his discourse, his companion in solitude, and his counsellor in all difficulties. His acquaintance with the Bible was very remarkable. The historical parts of both the Old and New Testament were so familiar to him, that, in recounting any fact from either, he seldom omitted a single circumstance; and, in general, related every incident in the very language of Scripture. The Psalms were his peculiar delight; he had many of them in his memory, and was in the habit both of repeating and singing several passages which he had selected, with great judgment, from the version by Tate and Brady. These, and some of Dr. Watts's Hymns, as also Bishop Kenn's Morning and Evening Hymn, furnished him with abundant matter for the exercise of his talents in psalmody, for which he was particularly distinguished. His knowledge of the New Testament was still more extraordinary The parables, exhortations,

and admonitions, of our blessed Saviour, and the practical and preceptive parts of the Epistles, were all treasured up in his memory, and he would repeat them, among his religious friends, with perfect accuracy, and in their proper connexion. Whatever was the subject of conversation, it reminded him of some apposite passage of Scripture, of some fact, or parable, or precept, which he was sure to introduce. He abounded much in religious anecdote, and seldom conversed, for any length of time, without bringing forward some favourite passage from "the great authors," as he termed them, which he had read.

It may be interesting and instructive to the reader to be presented with a few specimens of his conversation.—

Being one day in company where some persons, apparently religious, were speaking with much severity of the faults of an absent neighbour, this genuine christian, after betraying strong symptoms of uneasiness, at length broke out into these words: "Come, come, my friends, if we can say nothing good of him, let us say nothing at all. Shall I tell you what bishop Beveridge says, 'I resolve' (says he) 'never to speak of a man's virtues to his face, nor of his vices behind his back.' And what saith the apostle? 'Who maketh thee to differ from another?'"

Speaking of the danger of what some call little sins, he used often to say, "A small pen-knife will take away life as well as a large sword."

"Supposing" (he would say) "that some rich man were to leave me a large estate: before I had walked round the boundaries, and taken the number of the fields, I might be called away. What good, then, would the estate do me? Let me take care to secure the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

He often dwelt on that passage of Scripture, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue," Psa. xxxix. 1: and frequently repeated those passages in the Epistle of St. James, chap. iii., which relate to the government of the tongue; and he would enforce his admonitions by the story of the man who sent his servant to the market, to bring him the *best* article which he could find there, and the servant returned with a *tongue;* being sent a second time for the *worst* article in the market, he again brought back a *tongue*. "I hear many," he would sometimes say, "complain of their having *bad teeth* but I

have never heard any one complain of his having *a bad tongue.* I don't read, however, in Scripture, of any threatenings against bad teeth; but I find dreadful judgments denounced against a bad tongue."

When a child has been running towards him, he would say, "My Saviour tells me I must become like this little child, before I can enter into the kingdom of heaven; as free from hatred, and malice, and pride, and guile, as this little child."

He was very earnest and affectionate in his exhortations to his young friends; and used often to repeat to them that passage in the 119th Psalm:—

> "How shall the young preserve their ways,
> From *all* pollution free?
> By making still their course of life
> With thy commands agree."

And would conclude by saying, "Remember the word *all.*"

He used to speak with peculiar earnestness of the dreadful consequences of drunkenness, and the unreasonableness and vileness of such brutal indulgences. One of his remarks on this subject is worth preserving: "The horse, when brought to the water, will satisfy his thirst; but, after that is done, no power of man can prevail on him to take another drop; while his rider will drink, and drink, after his thirst is quenched, till he becomes more senseless than 'the beasts that perish.' What return shall I make to the Father of mercies, and the tender Lover of souls, for sparing me, and leading me, by his grace, to see the error of my ways?"

To show the necessity of an entire change of heart, he often mentioned a saying of bishop Taylor's, "If there be a crack in a bell, there is no possible way of repairing it; it must be cast a-new."

Another saying of bishop Taylor's he frequently repeated, with strong marks of approbation: "Though I could commit sin so secretly as that no person living should ever hear of it, and though I was sure that God would never punish me for it, yet would I not commit sin, for the very filthiness of sin."

Often would he say, that it was the fault of hearers, that sermons are heard with so little profit. "All the preachers," said he, "that I have heard warn me to flee

sin. Were all hearers to say to themselves, on entering the courts of the Lord's house, 'Take heed how ye hear,' they would not fail of profiting."

"We must put on the whole armour of God," he would say, "if we would come off conquerors. "I read of king Ahab being smitten between the joints of the harness."

"Soul-work," he would frequently say, "is the most important of all work; and it ought never to be done carelessly or negligently. Let me remember, while I live, the story of the poor man, who spent the greatest part of his time in holy reading, meditation, and prayer; and who, being asked by his friends, why he spent so many hours in that manner, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and said, 'For ever, for ever, for ever.'"

It would be easy to produce many similar religious remarks which fell from the lips of this excellent man; but these may suffice to discover the wisdom which is imparted by Divine grace.

There was nothing in the life of this happy christian more remarkable than his entire abstraction from the cares and concerns of the world. Having no wife or family to provide for, and his own wants being so few and so easily satisfied, his mind was wholly occupied by spiritual and eternal things. He "lived by faith," and had literally "his conversation in heaven." He was seen to glide silently through the streets and alleys of the town like an inhabitant of another world. The noise and bustle around him did not interest him in the least. His thoughts and affections were fixed "on things above," He had but one great concern, one grand end in view—"to glorify God who had called him unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus," 1 Pet. v. 10. To a person who was remarking that coals were grown extremely dear, he replied: "Coals are as cheap to me now as they were forty years ago." This was in reality the case; for no fire had ever warmed his little apartment, which, indeed, was furnished with neither grate nor chimney; yet of this apartment he often spoke with seeming rapture. He had found out a variety of attractions in it, which no eye but his could discern. He spoke with particular pleasure of the little sky-light which admitted the first rays of the rising sun into his room, and the mild beams of the moon, which

ne used to describe, as gilding the cover-lid of his bed, and beautifying every object around him.

It was his custom to assemble the people of the house in which he lived, for the purposes of praise and prayer, every evening before they retired to rest. The writer of this narrative was once present at these family exercises, and was highly delighted with his manner of conducting them. A few neighbours had joined the little assembly. With great spirit and energy the old man began by repeating several practical passages of Scripture, on which he grounded a short and affectionate exhortation: he then raised a psalm, in which all the little company heartily joined; and he concluded with bishop Wilson's excellent form of family prayer. The fervent and earnest manner in which he performed these domestic duties, was exceedingly impressive, and strongly marked the devout state of his mind. The same spirit of devotion shone forth when he joined in the public service of the church, on which he was a regular and constant attendant. The delight which he took in the church-service was very remarkable. To him the liturgy was always new, always interesting; he joined in every petition, with unabating fervour; and his earnest manner of making the responses, and his hearty zeal in singing the praises of God, had a remarkable effect on the whole congregation. This was particularly visible at the Manks service, which was set up in the town of Douglas in the year 1794, for the accommodation of the poor; and at which he offered to officiate gratuitously as clerk. The devout and animated manner in which he discharged this office, will long be remembered by those who attended that delightful service. The doors of the church were seldom, if ever, open, either on the Lord's day, or on week days, but he was found to make one of the congregation. He often blessed God, that, for nearly twenty years of his life, he had never been prevented, for one sabbath, from attending the house of the Lord. This he considered as an inestimable privilege. He was entirely free from all bigotry and party spirit. He was a truly scriptural christian. He loved and revered the Divine image wherever he beheld it; and one of his favourite sentiments was, "that true christians are of the same spirit and temper wherever they are found." A few weeks before

his death, a friend made him a present of a few of the tracts published by the "The Religious Tract Society." These he regarded as a rich treasure; and was in haste to circulate them among his acquaintances.

A short character of this inestimable man appeared some time ago in "The Manks Advertiser," which it may not be improper to introduce here: "Much is it to be lamented, that examples of christian piety are so rarely seen. They are, however, more numerous than careless observers imagine. In the quiet scenes of domestic life, in poverty, in sickness and affliction, real piety often passes her days unnoticed and unobserved. A few select friends, or a narrow circle of acquaintance, mark, admire, and love, these 'partakers of the Divine nature;' but to a busy, bustling, noisy world, they are utterly unknown. With one of these retired monuments of piety the writer of these lines has the happiness of being personally and intimately acquainted. Though the lot of this christian of the primitive school, has fallen in almost the lowest class of society; though his privations are many, and his temporal enjoyments few; though the coarsest viands furnish his daily repast, and a neighbouring spring supplies his constant beverage; though his mean apartment contains no more than the furniture of the prophet's chamber, 'a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick,' yet he is perpetually cheerful, thankful, and happy. He views the bright side of every object, and traces the goodness of his Creator wherever he directs his view. His piety renders him a most interesting companion; his familiar acquaintance with the oracles of Truth has furnished his mind with the most sublime sentiments. His continual converse is with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, who have taught him to think well, to speak well, to do well. He may justly be styled a practical christian, as all his readings, meditations, and prayers, have an immediate and direct influence on his life and conversation. He sees the shadows of the evening drawing on, 'with hopes full of immortality;' and his silver locks remind him to pass his remaining days as a pilgrim, with his staff in his hand, ready to depart. 'For these many years,' to use his own language, 'he has not promised himself a to-morrow,' but closes his eyes, every night, unsolicitous whether he awake in this world or another

Under the homely garb and obscure appearance of this lowly christian, the reflecting mind traces the future angel; and through the surrounding cloud of indigence and infirmity, perceives a ray of the Divinity shine forth. The period is not very distant, when princes and emperors may envy this pious inhabitant of a garret."

No wonder that the end of such a life of solid piety, resulting from faith in Christ Jesus, should be peace and assurance. A short time before his departure, the writer of these lines visited him for the last time, and found him patiently waiting for his change. At parting, a hope being expressed, that, if they met no more in this world, they should meet in a better, "Oh, yes," said he, with the confidence of one who knew in whom he believed, "we shall meet in heaven." In this composed and happy frame of mind he continued till the hour of his dissolution arrived. On Friday, 27th May, 1808, he entered into rest, in the 78th year of his age. His funeral was attended by a great concourse of people of all ranks. At the grave a poor woman was observed to weep bitterly: being asked the reason of her grief, she said, that she had, for some time past, received a weekly pension from the deceased, and that by his death she had lost one of the best and kindest of friends. To a numerous congregation a sermon was delivered from Rev. x. 5, 6, in which the following character of the deceased was given:—

"A personal and intimate acquaintance with our departed friend, for several years, enables me to speak of his religious attainments with much confidence. A more eminent example of constant and uniform piety has seldom appeared. His religion, flowing from a heart renewed by Divine grace, was lively and practical; not confined to the closet, nor the church, but regulating his thoughts, and words, and actions, through every hour of the day, so that it might, with the strictest truth, be said of him, that he was 'in the fear of the Lord all the day long.' Long before the sons of business, or of pleasure, awoke from their repose, this vigilant servant of the Lord was employed in his room, or in his solitary walks, in the delightful exercises of prayer and praise. His earnest and marked devotion in our solemn assemblies was truly animating and edifying to all around him; proving that he was 'fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' It was not in the house of prayer alone,

that the power of Divine grace shone forth in the piety of our departed brother; but it appeared at all times, and in all places. When silent, his very looks proclaimed the devout exercises of his mind, and when he spoke, his tongue declared that his heart was fixed 'on things above.' His conversation was always cheerful, edifying, and scriptural. So richly did 'the word of Christ dwell in him,' that he seldom used any other language than that of inspiration. To hear him converse, was almost like searching the Scriptures. Some passage from the sacred volume was the constant theme of his discourse; and particularly those passages which speak of the mercy and goodness of God, and the wonders of redeeming love. In this marked religious deportment, there was not the least affectation of sanctity, but heart, and tongue, and life, conspired to testify that all was genuine and sincere. His conduct in private corresponded with his conduct in public; and his behaviour towards his friends and neighbours was perfectly consistent with his prayers, and psalms, and hymns. The same Divine principle influenced his whole life and conversation, and constrained him to abound in offices of love and charity to the utmost of his power. Though he had but little to give, yet gladly and cheerfully did he give of that little; and often has he literally bestowed his last mite. The effect of this steady and uniform piety, was constant peace and secret joy. The power of religion, to communicate a happiness which the world can neither give nor take away, has seldom appeared more evidently than in the case of our deceased brother. With few of the outward comforts or accommodations of life, he possessed a treasure within, which made him richer than the kings of the earth. The description which the apostle gives to the first disciples of our Lord, may justly be applied to our departed friend, 'as unknown, yet well known; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.' Very lately was he heard to declare, that though there might be many fellow-christians as happy as he was, he believed there was none happier. His happiness was built upon 'the Rock of ages,' and grounded on the promises of that true and faithful Witness who is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' His whole dependence was on the precious merits and grace of his Redeemer. 'None but Christ, none but Christ,' was the language of his heart. Having

'fought a good fight,' having 'kept the faith, having 'finished his course,' he looked forward to his dissolution with hopes 'full of immortality.' He had long regarded death as the messenger which was to bring him to his everlasting home; and had often, with pleasure in his looks, pointed out the little spot where he wished his mortal remains to rest. There let them rest till the morning of the resurrection, when this distinguished follower of Christ shall be made equal to the angels, and shine as a star in the firmament of heaven."

From the foregoing narrative, the reader may learn many useful and important lessons.

1. How unsearchable are the riches of Divine grace, and how unbounded the goodness of God! Who that had seen William Kelly in his unconverted state wallowing in the mire of sin, and "committing iniquity with greediness," would ever have supposed that he ever was to become an eminent example of piety, and deserve and obtain the title of "The Happy Christian." If the reader be of the number of those careless and thoughtless sinners, who are hurrying on to the brink of ruin, destroying their health, their substance, their families, and their peace, and exposing themselves to eternal misery by indulging in the brutal sin of drunkenness—let him stop for a moment, and attentively consider the state of a man, who, like himself, was once "seeking death in the error of his ways," and yet, afterwards, by Divine grace, was awakened and converted, "renewed in the spirit of his mind," and "filled with all joy and peace in believing." Let him learn from this example, not to despair of obtaining an entire conquest over his prevailing sin, and of becoming "temperate in all things." Let him not, however, delay one hour to employ the same means. Let him have recourse to secret and earnest prayer to Almighty God, for the pardon of his sins, through the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ; let him also attend to holy meditation, to devout reading of the Scriptures, and the diligent use of all the appointed means of grace. Like the example now proposed to his meditation, let him earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit would renew his heart, and enable him to "cast away all his transgressions whereby he hath transgressed;" then shall he too be "washed and sanctified," and "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."

But if, reader, you have been kept from going to such lengths in outward sin as the subject of the foregoing narrative, be thankful to God, who has restrained your corrupt passions, and pray to him, that by the power of his grace he would renew your heart; for unless you are thus renewed, however decent your outward deportment may have been, your heart contains the same corrupt propensities as did that of William Kelly before his conversion, "for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies," Matt. xv. 19; and the renewal of the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, which enables the returning sinner to forsake these evil ways, and to turn unto the Lord, is what is called, in Scripture, being "born again," without which "we cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3.

2. The life of this happy christian discovers, in the clearest manner, the power of real religion to give solid rest and peace to the soul in all circumstances. Who would have expected to find one of the happiest of human beings in a cold and cheerless garret, with scarcely any of the external comforts of life, without any of the sweet endearments of relative intercourse, without any domestic enjoyments, or any of the amusements or relaxations which the world affords. On viewing his little apartment, there was nothing to be seen but the bed on which he lay, the chair on which he sat, and the chest which contained his Sunday garment; these were all of "this world's goods" which he possessed. Yet in this apartment, which to thousands of the sons of men would have been as comfortless as a prison, lived one of the most cheerful and most contented of human creatures. To him this retired corner was the seat of peace, and "the gate of heaven." Here he maintained sweet communion with his God, and often "rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The Bible was the source from which he derived perpetual consolation. In this sacred volume his treasure lay, as he frequently declared in the words of his favourite psalm:

> "Close in my heart and deeply hid,
> Thy word my treasure lies."

Like "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," he had often "little to eat; but his Bible was meat, drink, and company to him." If the reader would partake of his happiness, let him seek it in the same manner. If he be in possession of

a Bible, let him read it with prayer, as this happy christian did. Thus shall he become "wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus," and be "thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

3. The example of William Kelly shows, how independent real religion makes its possessor of the world, and all that it contains. While the busy multitude are wearing away life in toilsome labours, and anxious wishes to increase their possessions; while they are earnestly employed in adding "house to house, and field to field;" and are losing the comfort of the present hour, in making provision for years which may never come; the contented christian, who wants no more than "food to eat, and raiment to put on," passes his time cheerfully and thankfully, and enjoys a large measure of happiness here, at the same time looking, by faith in Jesus Christ, to a happiness hereafter, which shall never end. He knows that there is a sufficiency for him in the inexhaustible storehouse of Providence, and is assured that "all things shall work together for his good."

Few persons can hope to benefit thousands; but every reader of this tract, if rightly disposed, may benefit a few. However low his station in life may be, however unnoticed and unknown he may pass his days; he cannot, in these respects, exceed the subject of the foregoing narrative, who yet, by the power of religion, became eminent, and eminently useful. Let the reader from this hour resolve, by the blessing of God, to imitate the bright example which has now been set before him; and, following him, as he followed Christ, he will, in God's due time, join the ransomed throng, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises in the eternal kingdom of glory.

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THE

SHEPHERD

OF

SALISBURY PLAIN.

MR. JOHNSON, a very worthy, charitable gentleman, was travelling some time ago across one of those vast plains which are well known in Wiltshire. It was a fine summer's evening, and he rode slowly that he might have leisure to admire God in the works of his creation. For this gentleman was of opinion, that a walk or a ride was as proper a time as any to think about good things; for which reason, on such occasions, he seldom thought so much about his money, or his trade, or public news, as at other times, that he might with more ease and satisfaction enjoy the pious thoughts which the visible works of the great Maker of heaven and earth are calculated to raise in the mind; and with wonder and delight he dwelt on the glorious theme of redeeming

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love, as exhibited in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of lost and perishing sinners.

His attention was all of a sudden called off by the barking of a shepherd's dog, and looking up he spied one of those little huts, which are here and there to be seen on those great downs; and near it was the shepherd himself, busily employed with his dog in collecting together his vast flock of sheep. As he drew nearer, he perceived him to be a clean, well looking, poor man, nearly fifty years of age. His coat, though at first it had pro bably been of one dark colour, had been in a long course of years so often patched with different sorts of cloth, that it was now become hard to say which had been the original colour. But this, while it gave a plain proof of the shepherd's poverty, equally proved the exceeding neatness, industry, and good management of his wife. His stockings no less proved her good housewifery, for they were entirely covered with darns of different coloured worsted, but had not a hole in them! and his shirt, though nearly as coarse as the sails of a ship, was as white as the drifted snow, and was neatly mended, where time had either made a rent, or worn it thin. This furnishes a rule of judging, by which one shall seldom be deceived. If I meet with a labourer, hedging, ditching, or mending the highways, with his stockings and shirt tight and whole, however mean and bad his other garments are, I have seldom failed, on visiting his cottage to find that also clean and well ordered, and his wife notable, and worthy of encouragement. Whereas a poor woman, who will be lying abed, or gossiping with her neighbours, when she ought to be fitting out her husband in a cleanly manner, will seldom be found to be very good in other respects.

This was not the case with our shepherd, and Mr. Johnson was not more struck with the decency of his mean and frugal dress, than with his open, honest countenance, which bore strong marks of health, cheerfulness, and spirit.

Mr. Johnson, who was on a journey, and somewhat fearful from the appearance of the sky, that rain was at no great distance, accosted the shepherd by asking what sort of weather he thought it would be on the morrow.—"It will be such weather as pleases me"

answered the shepherd. Though the answer was delivered in the mildest and civilest tone that could be imagined, the gentleman thought the words themselves rather rude and surly, and asked him how that could be? "Because," replied the shepherd, "it will be such weather as shall please God, and whatever pleases him always pleases me.'

Mr. Johnson, who delighted in good men and good things, was very well satisfied with his reply. For he justly thought, that though a hypocrite may easily contrive to appear better than he really is to a stranger, and that no one should be too soon trusted, merely for having a few good words in his mouth: yet, as he knew that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" he always accustomed himself to judge favourably of those who had a serious deportment and solid manner of speaking. "It looks as if it proceeded from a good habit," said he, "and though I may now and then be deceived by it, yet it has not often happened to me to be so. Whereas if a man accosts me with an idle, dissolute, vulgar, indecent, or profane expression, I have never been deceived in him, but have generally on inquiry found his character to be as bad as his language gave me room to expect."

He entered into conversation with the shepherd in the following manner: "Yours is a troublesome life, honest friend," said he. "To be sure, sir," replied the shepherd, "'tis not a very lazy life; but 'tis not near so toilsome as that which my GREAT MASTER led for my sake; and he had every state and condition of life at his choice, and chose a hard one; while I only submit to the lot that is appointed me." "You are exposed to great cold and heat," said the gentleman. "True, sir," said the shepherd; "but then I am not exposed to great temptations; and so throwing one thing against another, God is pleased to contrive to make things more equal than we poor, ignorant, short-sighted creatures, are apt to think. David was happier when he kept his father's sheep on such a plain as this, and employed in singing some of his own Psalms perhaps, than ever he was when he became king of Israel and Judah. And I dare say we should never have had some of the most beautiful texts in all those fine Psalms, if he had not been a shepherd, which enabled

him to make so many fine comparisons and similitudes, as one may say, from country life, flocks of sheep, hills and vallies, and fountains of water."

"You think then," said the gentleman, "that a laborious life is a happy one." "I do, sir, and more so especially, as it exposes a man to fewer sins. If king Saul had continued a poor, laborious man to the end of his days, he might have lived happy and honest, and died a natural death, in his bed at last, which you know, sir, was more than he did. But I speak with reverence, for it was Divine Providence overruled all that, you know, sir, and I do not presume to make comparisons. Besides, sir, my employment has been particularly honoured: Moses was a shepherd in the plains of Midian. It was to 'shepherds keeping their flocks by night,' that the angels appeared in Bethlehem, to tell the best news, the gladdest tidings, that ever were revealed to poor, sinful men: often and often has the thought warmed my poor heart in the coldest night, and filled me with more joy and thankfulness than the best supper could have done."

Here the shepherd stopped, for he began to feel that he had made too free, and had talked too long. But Mr. Johnson was so well pleased with what he said, and with the cheerful, contented manner in which he said it, that he desired him to go on freely, for that it was a pleasure for him to meet with a plain man, who without any kind of learning but what he got from the Bible, was able to talk so well on a subject in which all men, high and low rich and poor, were equally concerned.

"Indeed I am afraid I make too bold, sir, for it better becomes me to listen to such a gentleman as you seem to be, than to talk in my poor way; but as I was saying sir, I wonder all working men do not derive as great joy and delight as I do from thinking how God has honoured poverty! Oh! sir, what great, or rich, or mighty men have had such honour put on them, or their condition, as shepherds, tent-makers, fishermen, and carpenters have had?"

"My honest friend," said the gentleman, "I perceive you are well acquainted with Scripture." "Yes, sir, pretty well, blessed be God! through his mercy I learnt to read when I was a little boy; though reading was not

so common when I was a child as I am told, through the goodness of Providence and the generosity of the rich, it is likely to become now-a-days. I believe there is no day for the last thirty years that I have not peeped at my Bible. If we can't find time to read a chapter, I defy any man to say he can't find time to read a verse: and a single text, sir, well followed and put in practice every day, would make no bad figure at the year's end; three hundred and sixty-five texts, without the loss of a moment's time, would make a pretty stock, a little golden treasury as one may say, from new-year's day to new-year's day; and if children were brought up to it, they would come to look for their text as naturally as they do for their breakfast. No labouring man, tis true, has so much leisure as a shepherd, for while the flock is feeding, I am obliged to be still, and at such times I can now and then tap a shoe for my children or myself, which is a great saving to us; and while I am doing that I repeat a bit of a chapter, which makes the time pass pleasantly in this wild, solitary place. I can say the best part of the Bible by heart; I believe I should not say the best part, for every part is good, but I mean the greatest part. I have led but a lonely life and have often had but little to eat, but my Bible has been meat, drink, and company to me, as I may say; and when want and trouble have come upon me, I don't know what I should have done, indeed, sir, if I had not had the promises of this book for my stay and support."

"You have had great difficulties then?" said Mr. Johnson. "Why, as to that, sir, not more than neighbour's fare; I have but little cause to complain, and much to be thankful; but I have had some little struggles as I will leave you to judge. I have a wife and eight children, whom I bred up in that little cottage which you see under the hill about half a mile off." "What, that with the smoke coming out of the chimney?" said the gentleman. "O no, sir," replied the shepherd, smiling, "we have seldom smoke in the evening, for we have little to cook, and firing is very dear in these parts. 'Tis that cottage which you see on the left hand of the church, near that little tuft of hawthorns." "What that hovel with only one room above and below, with scarce'y any chimney? How is it possible you can live there with

such a family?" "O! it is very possible and very certain too," cried the shepherd. "How many better men have been worse lodged! how many good Christians have perished in prisons and dungeons, in comparison of which my cottage is a palace! The house is very well, sir, and if the rain did not sometimes beat down upon us through the thatch when we are abed, I should not desire a better; for I have health, peace, and liberty, and no man maketh me afraid."

"Well, I will certainly call on you before long; but how can you contrive to lodge so many children?" "We do the best we can, sir. My poor wife is a very sickly woman, or we should always have done tolerably well. There are no gentry in the parish, so that she has not met with any great assistance in her sickness. The good curate of the parish, who lives in that pretty parsonage in the valley, is very willing, but not very able, to assist us on these trying occasions, for he has little enough for himself, and a large family into the bargain Yet he does what he can, and more than many richer men do, and more than he can well afford. Besides that, his prayers and good advice we are always sure of, and we are truly thankful for that; for a man must give, you know, sir, according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not."

'Are you in any distress at present?" said Mr. Johnson

No, sir, thank God," replied the shepherd. "I get my shilling a-day, and most of my children will soon be able to earn something; for we have only three under five years old." "Only!" said the gentleman, "that is a heavy burden." "Not at all; God fits the back to it Though my wife is not able to do any out-of-door work yet she breeds up her children to such habits of industry, that our little maids, before they are six years old, can first get a halfpenny, and then a penny a day by knitting. The boys, who are too little to do hard work, get a trifle by keeping the birds off the corn; for this the farmers will give them a penny or two-pence, and now and then a bit of bread and cheese into the bargain. W en the season of crow-keeping is over, then they glean or pick stones; any thing is better than idleness, sir; and if they did not get a farthing by it, I would make them do it just the same, for the sake of giving them early habits of labour.

"So you see, sir, I am not so badly off as many are

nay, if it were not that it costs me so much in 'potecary's stuff for my poor wife, I should reckon myself well off; nay, I do reckon myself well off, for blessed be God, he has granted her life to my prayers, and I would work myself to a 'natomy, and live on one meal a day, to add any comfort to her valuable life; indeed, I have often done the last, and thought it no great matter neither."

While they were in this part of the discourse, a fine, plump, cherry-cheek little girl ran up out of breath, with a smile on her young happy face, and without taking any notice of the gentleman, cried out with great joy—"Look here, father, only see how much I have got!" Mr. Johnson was much struck with her simplicity, but puzzled to know what was the occasion of this great joy. On looking at her he perceived a small quantity of coarse wool, some of which had found its way through the holes of her clean, but scanty and ragged woollen apron. The father said, "This has been a successful day, indeed, Molly; but don't you see the gentleman?" Molly now made a curtsey down to the very ground; while Mr. Johnson inquired into the cause of the mutual satisfaction which both father and daughter had expressed at the unusual good fortune of the day.

"Sir," said the shepherd, "poverty is a great sharpener of the wits.—My wife and I cannot endure to see our children (poor as they are) without shoes and stockings, not only on account of the pinching cold which cramps their poor little limbs, but because it degrades and debases them; and poor people, who have but little regard to appearances, will seldom be found to have any great regard for honesty and goodness; I don't say this is always the case; but am sure it is so too often. Now shoes and stockings being very dear, we could never afford to get them without a little contrivance. I must show you how I manage about the shoes when you condescend to call at our cottage, sir; as to stockings, this is one way we take to help to get them. My young ones, who are too little to do much work, sometimes wander at odd hours over the hills for the chance of finding what little wool the sheep may drop when they rub themselves, as they are apt to do, against the bushes.* These scattered

* This piece of frugal industry is not imaginary, but a real fact, as is the character of the shepherd, and his uncommon knowledge of the Scriptures

bits of wool the children pick out of the brambles, which I see have torn sad holes in Molly's apron to-day; they carry this wool home, and when they have got a pretty parcel together, their mother cards it; for she can sit and card in the chimney corner, when she is not able to wash, or work about the house. The biggest girl then spins it; it does very well for us without dyeing, for poor people must not stand for the colour of their stockings. After this, our little boys knit it for themselves, while they are employed in keeping cows in the fields, and after they get home at night. As for the knitting which the girls and their mother do, that is chiefly for sale, and helps to pay our rent."

Mr. Johnson lifted up his eyes in silent astonishment at the shifts which honest poverty can make, rather than beg or steal; and was surprised to think how many ways of subsisting there are which those who live at their ease little suspect. He secretly resolved to be more attentive to his own petty expenses than he had hitherto been; and to be more watchful that nothing was wasted in his family.

But to return to the shepherd. Mr. Johnson told him, that as he must needs be at his friend's house, who lived many miles off, that night, he could not, as he wished to do, make a visit to his cottage at present. "But I will certainly do it," said he, "on my return, for I long to see your wife and her nice little family, and to be an eye-witness of her neatness and good management." The poor man's tears started into his eyes on hearing the commendation bestowed on his wife; and wiping them off with the sleeve of his coat, for he was not worth a handkerchief in the world; he said, "Oh, sir, you just now, I am afraid, called me a humble man, but indeed I am a very proud one." "Proud!" exclaimed Mr. Johnson, "I hope not—pride is a great sin; and as the poor are liable to it as well as the rich, so good a man as you seem to be, ought to guard against it." "Sir," said he, "you are right; but I am not proud of myself. God knows, I have nothing to be proud of. I am a poor sinner; but indeed, sir, I am proud of my wife: she is not only the most tidy, notable woman on the plain, but she is the kindest wife and mother, and the most contented thankful Christian that I know. Last year I thought I should

have lost her in a violent fit of the rheumatism, caught by going to work too soon after her lying-in, I fear; for 'tis but a bleak, coldish place, as you may see, sir, in winter; and sometimes the snow lies so long under the hill, that I can hardly make myself a path to get out and buy a few necessaries in the next village; and we are afraid to send out the children, for fear they should be lost when the snow is deep. So, as I was saying, the poor soul was very bad indeed, and for several weeks lost the use of all her limbs except her hands; a merciful Providence spared her the use of these, so that when she could not turn in her bed, she could contrive to patch a rag or two for her family. She was always saying, had it not been for the great goodness of God, she might have had her hands lame as well as her feet, or the palsy instead of the rheumatism, and then she could have done nothing;—but nobody had so many mercies as she had.

"I will not tell you what we suffered during the bitter weather, sir, but my wife's faith and patience during that trying time were as good a lesson to me as any sermon I could hear, and yet Mr. Jenkins gave us very comfortable ones too, that helped to keep up my spirits.

"One Sunday afternoon, when my wife was at the worst, as I was coming out of church, for I went one part of the day, and my eldest daughter the other, so my poor wife was never left alone; as I was coming out of church, I say, Mr. Jenkins, the minister, called out to me, and asked me how my wife did, saying he had been kept from coming to see her by the deep fall of snow, and indeed from the parsonage-house to my hovel it was quite impassable. I gave him all the particulars he asked, and I am afraid a good many more, for my heart was quite full. He kindly gave me a shilling, and said he would certainly try to pick out his way and come and see her in a day or two.

"While he was talking to me, a plain, farmer-looking gentleman in boots, who stood by, listened to all I said, but seemed to take no notice. It was Mr. Jenkins's wife's father, who was come to pass the Christmas holydays at the parsonage-house. I had always heard him spoken of as a plain, frugal man, who lived close himself but was remarked to give away more than any of his ow-a-way neighbours.

"Well! I went home with great spirits at this seasonable and unexpected supply! for we had tapped our last sixpence, and there was little work to be had on account of the weather. I told my wife I had not come back empty-handed. 'No, I dare say not,' says she, 'you have been serving a Master "who filleth the hungry with good things, though he sendeth the rich empty away."' 'True, Mary;' says I, 'we seldom fail to get good spiritual food from Mr. Jenkins, but to-day he has kindly supplied our bodily wants.' She was more thankful when I showed her the shilling, than I dare say some of your great people are when they get a hundred pounds."

Mr. Johnson's heart smote him when he heard such value set upon a shilling; surely, said he to himself, I will never waste another: but he said nothing to the shepherd, who thus pursued his story:

"Next morning, before I went out, I sent part of the money to buy a little ale and brown sugar to put into her water-gruel; which you know, sir, made it nice and nourishing. I went out to cleave wood in a farmyard, for there was no standing out on the plain, after such snow as had fallen in the night. I went with a lighter heart than usual, because I had left my poor wife a little better, and comfortably supplied for this day; and I now resolved more than ever to trust God for the supplies of the next. When I came back at night, my wife fell a crying as soon as she saw me. This, I own, I thought but a bad return for the blessings she had so lately received, and so I told her. 'O,' said she, 'it is too much, we are too rich; I am now frightened, not lest we should have no portion in this world, but for fear we should have our whole portion in it. Look here, John!' So saying she uncovered the bed whereon she lay, and showed me two warm, thick, new blankets. I could not believe my own eyes, sir, because when I went out in the morning, I had left her with no other covering than our little, old, thin, blue rug. I was still more amazed when she put half a crown into my hand, telling me she had had a visit from Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Jones, the latter of whom had bestowed all these good things upon us. Thus, sir, have our lives been crowned with mercies. My wife got about again, and I do believe, under Providence, it was owing to these comforts: for the rheumatism sir,

without blankets by night, and flannel by day, is but a baddish job, especially to people who have little or no fire. She will always be a weakly body; but, thank God, her soul prospers, and is in health. But I beg your pardon, sir, for talking on at this rate."—"Not at all, not at all," said Mr. Johnson; "I am much pleased with your story; you shall certainly see me in a few days. Good night." So saying, he slipped a crown into his hand, and rode off. "Surely," said the shepherd, "*goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life*," as he gave the money to his wife when he got home at night.

As to Mr. Johnson, he found abundant matter for his thoughts during the rest of his journey. On the whole he was more disposed to envy than to pity the shepherd. "I have seldom seen," said he, "so happy a man. It is a sort of happiness which the world could not give, and which, I plainly see, it has not been able to take away. As Christ said to his disciples, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. (John xiv. 27.) And your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. (John xvi. 22.) This must be the true spirit of religion. I see more and more that true godliness is not merely a thing of words and opinions, but a living principle brought into every common action of a man's life. What else could have supported this poor couple under every bitter trial of want and sickness? No, my honest shepherd, I do not pity, but I respect and even honour thee; and I will visit thy poor hovel on my return to Salisbury with as much pleasure as I am now going to the house of my friend."

PART II.

I AM willing to hope that my readers will not be sorry to hear some farther particulars of their old acquaintance *the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*. They will call to mind, that at the end of the first part, he was returning home full of gratitude for the favours he had received from Mr. Johnson, whom we left pursuing his journey, after having promised to make a visit to the shepherd's cottage.

Mr Johnson, after having passed some time with his friend, set out on his return to Salisbury, and on the Saturday evening reached a very small inn, a mile or two

were lightly esteemed by him, in comparison of another possession, which, added to the above, made up the whole of what he had inherited from his father; and which last he would not have parted with, if no other could have been had, for a king's ransom: this was a large old Bible, which lay on the window-seat, neatly covered with brown cloth, variously patched. This sacred book was most reverently preserved from dog's-ears, dirt, and every other injury, but such as time and much use had made it suffer in spite of care. On the clean white walls was pasted a hymn on the Crucifixion of our Saviour, a print of the Prodigal Son, the Shepherd's Hymn, and Patient Joe, or the Newcastle Collier.

After the first salutations were over, Mr. Johnson said, that if they would go on quietly with their dinner, he would sit down. Though a good deal ashamed, they thought it more respectful to obey the gentleman, who having cast his eye on their slender provisions, gently rebuked the shepherd for not having indulged himself, as it was Sunday, with a morsel of bacon to relish his potatoes. The shepherd said nothing, but poor Mary coloured and hung down her head, saying, "Indeed, sir, it is not my fault, I did beg my husband to allow himself a bit of meat out of your honour's bounty; but he was too good to do it, and it is all for my sake." The shepherd seemed unwilling to come to an explanation, but Mr. Johnson desired Mary to go on. So she continued, "You must know, sir, that both of us, next to a sin, dread a debt, and indeed in some cases a debt is a sin; but with all our care and pains we have never been able quite to pay off the doctor's bill for that bad fit of rheumatism which I had last winter. Now when you were pleased to give my husband that kind present the other day, I heartily desired nim to buy a bit of meat for Sunday, as I said before, that he might have a little refreshment for himself out of your kindness. 'But,' answered he, 'Mary, it is never out of my mind long together, that we still owe a few shillings to the doctor (and thank God it is all we did owe in the world). Now if I carry him this money directly it will not only show him our honesty and our good will; but it will be an encouragement to him to come to you another time, in case you should be taken once more in such a bad fit; for I must own,' added my

poor husband, that the thought of your being so terribly ill without any help, is the only misfortune that I want courage to face.'

Here the grateful woman's tears ran down so fast that she could not go on. She wiped them with the corner of her apron, and humbly begged pardon for making so free. "Indeed, sir," said the shepherd, "though my wife is full as unwilling to be in debt as myself, yet I could hardly prevail on her to consent to my paying this money just then, because she said it was hard I should not have a taste of the gentleman's bounty myself. But for once, sir, I would have my own way. For you must know, as I pass best part of my time alone, tending my sheep, 'tis a great point with me, sir, to get comfortable matter for my own thoughts; so that 'tis rather self-interest in me to allow myself in no pleasures and no practices that won't bear thinking on over and over. For when one is a good deal alone you know, sir, all one's bad deeds do rush in upon one, as I may say, and so torment one, that there is no true comfort to be had but in keeping clear of wrong doings and false pleasures; and that I suppose may be one reason why so many folks hate to stay a bit by themselves.—But, as I was saying, when I came to think the matter over on the hill yonder, said I to myself, a good dinner is a good thing, I grant, and yet it will be but cold comfort to me a week after, to be able to say—to be sure I had a nice shoulder of mutton last Sunday for dinner, thanks to the good gentleman, but then I am in debt.—I *had* a rare dinner, that's certain, but the pleasure of that has long been over, and the debt still remains. I have spent the crown, and now if my poor wife should be taken in one of those fits again, die she must, unless God work a miracle to prevent it, for I can get no help for her. This thought settled all; and I set off directly and paid the crown to the doctor with as much cheerfulness as I should have felt on sitting down to the fattest shoulder of mutton that ever was roasted. And if I was contented at the time, think how much more happy I have been at the remembrance! O, sir, there are no pleasures worth the name but such as bring no plague or sorrow after them."

Mr. Johnson was satisfied with the shepherd's reasons; and agreed that though a good dinner was not to be

despised, yet it was not worthy to be compared with a *contented mind, which* (as the Bible truly says) *is a continual feast.* "But come," said the good gentleman, "what have we got in this brown mug?" "As good water," said the shepherd, "as any in the king's dominions. I have heard of countries beyond sea in which there is no wholesome water; nay, I have been myself in a great town not far off, where they are obliged to buy all the water which they get, while a good Providence sends to my very door a spring as clear and fine as Jacob's well. When I am tempted to repine that I have often no other drink, I call to mind that it was nothing better than a cup of cold water which the woman of Samaria drew for the greatest guest that ever visited this world."

"Very well," replied Mr. Johnson; "but as your honesty has made you prefer a poor meal to being in debt, I will at least send and get something for you to drink I saw a little public-house just by the church, as I came along. Let that little rosy-faced fellow fetch a mug of beer." So saying, he looked full at the boy, who did not offer to stir; but cast an eye at his father, to know what he was to do. "Sir," said the shepherd, "I hope we shall not appear ungrateful, if we seem to refuse your favour; my little boy would, I am sure, fly to serve you on any other occasion. But, good sir, it is Sunday, and should any of my family be seen at a public-house on a Sabbath-day, it would be a much greater grief to me than to drink water all my life. I am often talking against these doings to others, and if I should say one thing and do another, you can't think what an advantage it would give many of my neighbours over me, who would be glad enough to report, that they had caught the shepherd's son at the ale-house, without explaining how it happened. Christians, you know, sir, must be doubly watchful, or they will not only bring disgrace on themselves, but what is much worse, on that holy name by which they are called."

"Are you not a little too cautious, my honest friend?" said Mr. Johnson. "I humbly ask your pardon, sir," replied the shepherd, "if I think that is impossible. In my poor notion I no more understand how a man can be too cautious, than how he can be too strong or too healthy."

"You are right, indeed," said Mr. Johnson, "as a general principle, but this struck me as a very small thing.' "Sir," said the shepherd, "I am afraid you will think me very bold, but you encourage me to speak out."—"'Tis what I wish," said the gentleman. "Then, sir," resumed the shepherd, "I doubt, if where there is a temptation to do wrong, any thing can be called small: that is, in short, if there is any such thing as a small, wilful sin. A poor man, like me, is seldom called out to do great things, so that it is not by a few striking deeds his character can be judged by his neighbours, but by the little round of daily customs he allows himself in."—While they were thus talking, the children, who had stood very quietly behind, and had not stirred a foot, now began to scamper about all at once, and in a moment ran to the window-seat to pick up their little old hats. Mr. Johnson looked surprised at this disturbance; the shepherd asked his pardon, telling him it was the sound of the church bell which had been the cause of their rudeness; for their mother had brought them up with such a fear of being too late for church, that it was but who could catch the first stroke of the bell, and be first ready. He had always taught them to think that nothing was more indecent than to get into church after it was begun; for as the service opened with an exhortation to repentance, and a confession of sin, it looked very presumptuous not to be ready to join in it; it looked as if people did not feel themselves to be sinners. And though such as lived at a great distance might plead difference of clocks as an excuse, yet those who lived within the sound of the bell could pretend neither ignorance nor mistake.

Mary and her children set forward. Mr. Johnson and the shepherd followed, taking care to talk the whole way on such subjects as might fit them for the solemn duties of the place to which they were going. "I have often been sorry to observe," said Mr. Johnson, 'that many who are reckoned decent, good kind of people, and who would on no account neglect going to church, yet seem to care but little in what frame or temper of mind they go thither. They will talk of their worldly concerns till they get within the door, and then take them up again the very minute the sermon is over, which makes me ready to fear they lay too much stress on the mere form of going

to a place of worship. Now, for my part, I always find that it requires a little time to bring my mind into a state fit to do any *common* business well, much more this great and most necessary business at all."—" Yes, sir," said the shepherd, " and then I think, too, how busy I should be in preparing my mind, if I was going into the presence of a great gentleman, or a lord, or the king; and shall the King of kings be treated with less respect? Besides one likes to see people feel as if going to church was a thing of choice and pleasure, as well as a duty, and that they were as desirous not to be the last there, as they would be if they were going to a feast or a fair."

After service, Mr. Jenkins the clergyman, who was well acquainted with the character of Mr. Johnson, and had a great respect for him, accosted him with much civility; expressing his concern that he could not enjoy just now so much of his conversation as he wished, as he was obliged to visit a sick person at a distance, but hoped to have a little talk with him before he left the village. As they walked along together Mr. Johnson made such inquiries about the shepherd, as served to confirm him in the high opinion he entertained of his piety, good sense, industry, and self-denial. They parted, the clergyman promising to call in at the cottage in his way home.

The shepherd, who took it for granted that Mr. Johnson was gone to the parsonage, walked home with his wife and children, and was beginning in his usual way to catechise and instruct his family, when Mr. Johnson came in, and insisted that the shepherd should go on with his instructions, just as if he were not there. This gentleman, who was very desirous of being useful to his own servants and workmen in the way of religious instruction, was sometimes sorry to find, that though he took a good deal of pains, they did not now and then quite understand him; for though his meaning was very good, his language was not always very plain; and though the *things* he said were not hard to be understood, yet the *words* were, especially to such as were very ignorant. And he now began to find out that if people were ever so wise and good, yet if they had not a simple, agreeable, and familiar way of expressing themselves, some of their plain hearers would not be much the better for them. For this reason he was not above listening to the plain,

humble way in which this honest man taught his family; for though he knew that he himself had many advantages over the shepherd, had more learning, and could teach him many things, yet he was not too proud to learn even of so poor a man, in any point where he thought the shep herd might have the advantage of him.

This gentleman was much pleased with the knowledge and piety which he discovered in the answers of the children; and desired the shepherd to tell him how he contrived to keep up a sense of divine things in his own mind, and in that of his family, with so little leisure, and so little reading. "O, as to that, sir," said the shepherd, "we do not read much except in one book, to be sure; but my hearty prayer for God's blessing on the use of that book, what little knowledge is needful seems to come of course, as it were. And my chief study has been to bring the fruits of the Sunday reading into the week s business, and to keep up the same sense of God in the heart, when the Bible is in the cupboard as when it is in the hand. In short, to apply what I read in the book, to what I meet with in the field."

"I don't quite understand you," said Mr. Johnson. "Sir," replied the shepherd, "I have but a poor gift at conveying these things to others, though I have much comfort from them in my own mind; but I am sure that the most ignorant and hard-working people, who are in earnest about their salvation, may help to keep up devout thoughts and good affections during the week, though they have hardly any time to look at a book; and it will help them to keep out bad thoughts too, which is no small matter. But then they must know the Bible; they must have read the word of God diligently; that is a kind of stock in trade for a Christian to set up with; and it is this which makes me so careful in teaching it to my children; and even in storing their memories with psalms and chapters. This is a great help to a poor hard-working man, who will scarcely meet with any thing but what he may turn to some good account. If one lives in the fear and love of God, almost every thing one sees abroad will teach one to adore his power and goodness, and bring to mind some text of Scripture, which shall fill the heart with thankfulness, and the mouth with praise. When I look upwards, *the heavens declare the glory of God;* and shall I be silent

and ungrateful? If I look round and see the valleys standing thick with corn, how can I help blessing that Being who *giveth me all things richly to enjoy?*—I may learn gratitude from the beasts of the field, for the *Ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib*, and shall a Christian not know, shall a Christian not consider, what great things God, who is rich in mercy, has done for him, when for his great love wherewith he hath loved him, he hath not withheld his only begotten Son, but delivered him up to die the death of the cross for sinners, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish but have everlasting life. I who am a shepherd endeavour to fill my soul with a constant remembrance of that good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep; who caused me to hear his voice, and enables me to follow him; who knoweth his sheep, calleth them by name, giveth to them eternal life, and hath declared that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. Yes, I desire ever to cherish the remembrance of that kind Shepherd who feedeth me in green pastures, and maketh me lie down beside the still waters. And when I look forward I rejoice through faith in my Divine Redeemer, that I can say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

"You are happy," said Mr. Johnson, "in this retired life, by which you escape the corruptions of the world." "Sir," said the shepherd, "I do not escape the corruptions of my own evil nature. Even there, on that wild solitary hill, I can find out that my heart is prone to evil thoughts. I suppose, sir, that different states have different temptations. You great folks that live in the world, perhaps, are exposed to some, of which such a poor man as I am know nothing. But to one who leads a lonely life, like me, evil thoughts are a chief besetting sin; and I can no more withstand these without the grace of God, than a rich gentleman can withstand the snares of evil company without the same grace. And I feel that I stand in need of God's help continually, and if he should give me up to my own evil heart I should be lost."

Mr. Johnson approved of the shepherd's sincerity, for he had always observed, that where there was no humility and no watchfulness against sin, there was no religion,

and he said, that the man who did not feel himself to be a sinner, in his opinion could not be a Christian.

Just as they were in this part of their discourse, Mr. Jenkins, the clergyman, came in. After the usual salutations, he said, "Well, shepherd, I wish you joy; I know you will be sorry to gain any advantage by the death of a neighbour; but old Wilson, my clerk, was so infirm, and I trust so well prepared, that there is no reason to be sorry for his death. I have been to pray by him, but he died while I staid. I have always intended you should succeed to his place; 'tis no great matter of profit, but every little is something."

"No great matter, sir!" cried the shepherd; "indeed it is a great thing to me; it will more than pay my rent. Blessed be God for all his goodness." Mary said nothing, but lifted up her eyes full of tears in silent gratitude.

"I am glad of this little circumstance," said Mr. Jenkins, "not only for your sake, but for the sake of the office itself. I so heartily reverence every religious institution, that I would never have even the *Amen* added to the excellent prayers of our church, by vain or profane lips; and if it depended on me, there should be no such thing in the land as an idle, drunken, or irreligious parish-clerk. Sorry I am to say that this matter is not always sufficiently attended to, and that I know some of a very indifferent character

Mr. Johnson now inquired of the clergyman, whether there were many children in the parish. "More than you would expect," replied he, "from the seeming smallness of it, but there are some little hamlets which you do not see." "I think," replied Mr. Johnson, "I recollect that in the conversation I had with the shepherd on the hill yonder, he told me you had no Sunday school." "I am sorry to say we have none," said the minister; "I do what I can to remedy this misfortune by public catechising; but having two or three churches to serve, I cannot give so much time as I wish to private instruction; and having a large family of my own, and no assistance from others, I have never been able to establish a school."

"There is an excellent institution in London," said Mr Johnson, called the Sunday School Society, which kindly give books, and other helps on the application of such

pious ministers as stand in need of their aid, and which I am sure would have assisted you; but I think we shall be able to do something ourselves. Shepherd, continued he, if I were a king, and had it in my power to make you a rich and great man, with a word speaking, I would not do it. Those who are raised by some sudden stroke, much above the station in which Divine Providence had placed them, seldom turn out very good or very happy. I have never had any great things in my power, but as far as I have been able, I have been always glad to assist the worthy. I have, however, never attempted or desired to set any poor man much above his natural condition; but it is a pleasure to me to lend him such assistance as may make that condition more easy to himself, and to put him in a way which shall call him to the performance of more duties than perhaps he could have performed without my help, and of performing them in a better manner.—What rent do you pay for this cottage?"

"Fifty shillings a year, sir."

"It is in a sad tattered condition; is there not a better to be had in the village?

"That in which the poor clerk lived," said the clergyman, "is not only more tight and whole, but has two decent chambers, and a very large, light kitchen."—"That will be very convenient," replied Mr. Johnson; "pray what is the rent?" "I think," said the shepherd, "poor neighbour Wilson gave somewhat about four pounds a year, or it might be guineas."—"Very well," said Mr. Johnson, "and what will the clerk's place be worth, think you?" "About three pounds," was the answer.

"Now," continued Mr. Johnson, "my plan is, that the shepherd should take that house immediately; for as the poor man is dead, there will be no need of waiting till quarter-day, if I make up the difference." "True, sir," said Mr. Jenkins, "and I am sure my wife's father, whom I expect to-morrow, will willingly assist a little towards buying some of the Clerk's old goods. And the sooner they remove the better, for poor Mary caught that bad rheumatism by sleeping under a leaky thatch." The shepherd was too much moved to speak, and Mary could hardly sob out, "Oh, sir, you are too good; indeed this house will do very well." "It may do very well for you and your children, Mary," said Mr. Johnson, gravely, "but

it will not do for a school; the kitchen is neither large nor light enough. Shepherd," continued he, "with your good minister's leave and kind assistance, I propose to set up in this parish a Sunday School, and to make you the master. It will not at all interfere with your weekly calling; and it is the only lawful way in which you could turn the Sabbath into a day of some little profit to your family, by doing, as I hope, a great deal of good to the souls of others. The rest of the week you will work as usual. The difference of rent between this house and the clerk's I shall pay myself, for to put you into a better house at your own expense would be no great act of kindness. As for honest Mary, who is not fit for hard labour, or any out-of-door work, I propose to endow a small weekly school, of which she shall be the mistress, and employ her notable turn to good account, by teaching ten or a dozen girls to knit, sew, spin, card, or any other useful way of getting their bread; for all this I shall only pay her the usual price, for I am not going to make you rich, but useful."

"Not rich, sir!" cried the shepherd. "How can I ever be thankful enough for such blessings? And will my poor Mary have a dry thatch over her head? and shall I be able to send for the doctor when I am like to lose her? Indeed my cup runs over with blessings; I hope God will give me humility." Here he and Mary looked at each other and burst into tears. The gentlemen saw their distress, and kindly walked out upon the little green before the door, that these honest people might give vent to their feelings. As soon as they were alone they crept into one corner of the room, where they thought they could not be seen, and fell on their knees, devoutly blessing and praising God for his mercies. Never were heartier prayers presented, than this grateful couple offered up for their benefactors. The warmth of their gratitude could only be equalled by the earnestness with which they besought the blessing of God on the work in which they were going to engage, that they might be enabled to lead poor children to that gracious Saviour who welcomed the young to him on earth, and who still bears them on his heart in heaven.

The two gentlemen now left this happy family, and walked to the parsonage, where the evening was spent

in a manner very edifying to Mr. Johnson. Mr. Jenkins gave Mr. Johnson some account of his parish, and described the different characters of many of its inhabitants. "Much is there of human depravity," said he, "even in such a retired village as this; the virtues of cottagers, which have been so praised by poets and novelists, exist only in imagination. Till the poor receive the Gospel, see themselves to be ruined sinners, and trust in the blood which Christ shed on the cross, I have little hope for their moral improvement. Their outward conduct may be amended, but the heart, the heart—nothing but divine grace can give new life to the heart of man, which is naturally dead in trespasses and sins. Oh, may the Holy Spirit apply these truths of Christ to the souls of all my parishioners, that they may become Christians indeed!" "Amen," said Mr. Johnson, "and may I henceforth live more under the influence of these truths, and be enabled to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour, in all things."

The next day Mr. Johnson took all proper measures for putting the shepherd in immediate possession of his now comfortable habitation. Mr. Jenkins's father-in-law, the worthy gentleman who gave the shepherd's wife the blankets, as mentioned in the first part of this history, arrived at the parsonage before Mr. Johnson left it, and assisted in fitting up the clerk's cottage.

Mr. Johnson took his leave, promising to call on the worthy minister and his new clerk once a year, in his summer's journey over the plain, as long as it should please God to spare his life.

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THE

SABBATH-BREAKER RECLAIMED;

OR,

A PLEASING HISTORY

OF

THOMAS BROWN

ON a fine sabbath morn in the sweet month of May,
When the hawthorn in blossom was seen,
When perfumes fill'd the air, and all nature look'd gay,
And the fields wore a livery of green,

Thomas said to his wife, 'See the morning is fine,
'Then let us walk out at our leisure;
'I have work'd all the week, recreation we'll seek,
'And the fields will afford us much pleasure.'

Said his wife, "All our clothes are both dirty and torn,
"Which will set decent people a talking:
'I shall feel much asham'd, and we both shall be blam'd
"By those we may meet as we're walking."

'The birds and the cattle,' says Thomas, 'you know,
'Dress all days alike, void of care;
Let us follow their plan, be as blithe as we can,
'And not make things worse than they are.

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INSTITUTED 1799.

"They can't be well worse, for at home or abroad
"We've nothing for dinner to-day;
"Our money's all gone, and credit we've none,
"So e'en let us do as you say."

They lock'd up their house, and their children they took,
Unhappy at home or abroad;
And away they all went ('twas a sabbath mispent)
For the chance of the fields or the road.

Not long they had walk'd when a neighbour they met
And they tried his attention to shun;
But he saw them so plain, to escape him was vain,
And thus to discourse he begun:

"Where have you been wandering about, Thomas Brown,
"In your jacket so out of repair?"
'A rambling I've been, o'er the meadows so green,
'And I work in the jacket I wear.'

"But do you not hear the church bell, Thomas Brown?
"Oh! why not the sabbath regard?"
'We a living must seek, and we work all the week,
'If we can't enjoy Sunday 'tis hard!'

"But what could your work do for you, Thomas Brown,
"Were you not by your Maker befriended?"
'Why that I don't know; if to church we should go,
'Matters would not perhaps be much mended."

'What I say I intend for your good, Thomas Brown,
"And your friend am desirous to be!
'Why that I suppose, or your time you'd not lose,
'To discourse with a poor man like me.'

"This world is fast hastening away, Thomas Brown,
"And short are the pleasures of man."
'Then there's no time to spare; let us drive away care,
'And merrily live while we can."

"But what when this world you shall leave, Thomas Brown
"If your soul in dread torments should lie?"
Why that, to be sure, would be hard to endure,
'But I cannot well help it, not I.'

'Yet the wretch under sentence of death, Thomas Brown,
"Would be glad for a pardon to run!"
Why, yes, so would I, if condemned to die;
'But I know not what harm I have done.'

'The Bible will tell you your sins, Thomas Brown,
"And a Saviour will bring to your view."
The learn'd there may look, but I can't read the book:
'It may, or it may not be true.'

'Hie away to the church on the hill, Thomas Brown,
"For if you can't read you can hear."
'The man with the band I shall not understand:
'The rich and the wise may go there.'

The gospel is preach'd to the poor, Thomas Brown
"And would lighten your cares, do not doubt it."
You speak like a friend, but I do not intend
'To trouble myself much about it.

" Could I tell you where treasure is hid, Thomas Brown,
" You would spare neither labour nor pains."
' In that you are right; I would dig day and night,
' And merrily live on my gains."

" But what! should you gain the whole world, Thomas Brown,
" And lose your own soul at the last?"
' Why my courage would cool; I should then prove a fool,
' And sorely repent of the past.'

" Seek in time for the kingdom of God, Thomas Brown,
" And your pleasures will never decay."
' I feel half inclined to become of your mind:
' And I hope I shall do as you say.'

" May the God of all peace give you grace, Thomas Brown,
" In his fear and his favour to dwell."
Your wish is most kind, I shall bear it in mind;
" And so for the present farewell.'

SECOND DIALOGUE.

SUNDAY MORNING.

' Whither go you, so clean and well clad, Thomas Brown?
" For your jacket's a new one, I see."
' Sir, I go, with good will, to the church on the hill,
' To thank God for his goodness to me.'

' To hear this, it does my heart good, Thomas Brown,
" And I hope you'll continue to go."
This, sir, I intend; and as you are my friend,
' You'll be pleased something further to know.'

When, after our converse, I first went to church,
' I remember'd the days of my folly;
' When I heard them at prayer, I thought God must be there;
' And the place appear'd solemn and holy.'

' The prayers being over, then sweetly they sang,
' I felt glad that I had gone in;
' The sermon came next, and this was the text,
' " That death is the wages of sin."

' The minister told us, that all wicked men,
' Who the paths of iniquity trod,
' Would be turn'd into hell, in darkness to dwell,
' And all people forgetting their God.

' I listen'd awhile, and felt struck with fear,
' A cloud seem'd to hang o'er my head;
' A tear stood in my eye, and I could not tell why,
' But my heart was as heavy as lead.

On the morrow I spake of what I had heard,
' While my shopmates were laughing and lazy,
' And I should have said more, but they set up a roar,
' And cried out, " Tom Brown is gone crazy!"

'Then I laugh'd and I sang with the best of them all,
'And tried to forget what had pass'd;
'But I thought in my mind, shall I good in this find
'If I lose my own soul at last?

'So again the next Sunday I went to the church,
'Though my shopmates all join'd to upbraid;
'For, I thought, why should I fear a man that will die,
'More than Him by whom all things were made?

'The minister spake so distinct and so plain
'That the poorest might well understand:
'"Repent ye," said he, and seem'd pointing at me
'"For the kingdom of God is at hand."

'I felt myself vile as he told me my sins;
'That he knew them, I could not well doubt it,
'For it came in my head, what to you I had said,
'And I thought you had told all about it.

'When I heard what my Saviour had suffer'd, I wept,
'How he groan'd and he died on the tree;
'But oh, the blest hour! for the word came with power;
'And I hop'd that he suffer'd for me!

'Thus God has dealt with me, and thus has been pleas'd
'His goodness and grace to impart;
'It was terror and dread that first bow'd down my head,
'But 'twas mercy that melted my heart.

'Every week from my wages a sixpence I spare,
'A Bible to buy, for I need it;
'And, when time I can spare, to a friend I repair,
'Who has promis'd to teach me to read it.

'And you, sir, have been a most kind friend to me,
'This I own, though I cannot repay;
'But yet there is One, who this kindness will own,
'At the last and the great judgment-day.

'For myself, as becomes a poor, weak, sinful man;
'I will pray for support from on high;
'To walk in God's ways, my Saviour to praise,
'And to trust in his grace 'till I die.

'And though poor, and unwise in the ways of the world
'I believe in the truth of God's word,
'That *true riches* are they, which will not pass away,
'And *true wisdom*, the fear of the Lord!'

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No. 801.

NARRATIVE SERIES.

THE RECLAIMED INFIDEL;

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF

THE LAST DAYS OF WILLIAM ROSE,

A drummer in his majesty's 59th regiment of foot, who died at Berhampore, East Indies, January 8, 1821.

WILLIAM ROSE, the subject of this narrative, was born at Nottingham. In his youth, he was religiously instructed; but it is deeply to be lamented that many, who appear in the spring of life to be very hopeful, are carried away by the temptations with which they are afterwards assailed. This was the case with William Rose. When he left his father's roof, and entered into the army as a drummer of the 59th regiment, one good principle after another was destroyed, and vice substituted in its place, till scarcely a vestige of his former character remained, and he soon equalled, if he did not exceed, most of his depraved companions in iniquity.

That his character may be more fully known, it will be necessary to notice particularly some of its most prominent features, during the greater part of his life. He was much addicted to the crime of SWEARING. His oaths were often dreadful, and of that description which produces a shuddering horror in those not accustomed to such things. He affixed the holy name of God to every trifle, and called his attention to every passing circumstance. Sometimes he used it in derision, and frequently as the means of giving vent, with peculiar force, to his violent anger. He also often employed it to aggravate his denunciations of revenge, or to imprecate evil upon others. To call upon the Almighty God to curse himself and his fellow-creatures, and to bear witness to a lie, was with him no uncommon

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56, PATERNOSTER ROW AND 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

thing. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a grosser insult to the Creator of the universe than this. We acknowledge that he is infinitely holy, and worthy of the highest reverence; and to call him in this solemn manner to witness the merest trifle, or to execute the most awful threats that our angry minds could desire, is to laugh at him who is clothed with "terrible majesty," and before whom angels veil their faces, and devils tremble.

William Rose was distinguished by the commission of other vices, which debase the mind, degrade the moral character, and which, being persisted in, ruin both the body and the soul. But the foundation of all his crimes was, his confirmed INFIDELITY. When man has departed from his God, he endeavours to believe that he does not exist, or that if he does, he interferes not with the concerns of mankind. Hence he treated religion with the most profane ridicule, nor could he endure to hear any thing read which had the slightest appearance of devotion.

The Bible was constantly the object of this infidel's scorn, and in the presence of many witnesses, he has stamped it under his feet, calling it a collection of lies. He drank deeply into the pernicious opinions of Paine, and endeavoured to disseminate his sentiments among his companions. As for Jesus Christ and his apostles, and all those by whom the world has been spiritually enlightened, and millions "saved with an everlasting salvation," he blasphemously termed them a set of impostors.

How easy is it for the infidel to scoff at the Bible, and to assert that its contents are false and foolish! but how difficult to prove his assertions! If, as the infidel affirms, the Bible was written by bad men, how can it be accounted for, that it contains such sublime and lovely descriptions of the character of God; such just and holy precepts; such tremendous threatenings against those who do evil, and the promise of such bountiful rewards to those who do well? But if the book was written by good men, why reject their testimony as vile impostors? May it not be suspected, however, that the infidel renounces the Bible, not because it is not good enough, but because it is so good?—not because its contents are so mysterious, but because they are so holy? "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil," John iii. 19. They cavil at the

Bible, as the criminal cavils at the laws of his country, because they condemn him; or as the owls and the bats dislike the sun, because of its light and splendour. Infidelity cannot endure the light. Its system is supported by sophistry and false reasoning.

Notwithstanding the gross immorality and avowed infidelity of this young man, he became a signal monument of the mercy of God, and gave satisfactory evidence of his being made "a new creature." The preparatory circumstance which led to the return of this prodigal, was a lingering liver complaint; and this disorder increasing, he was brought into the hospital at Berhampore, on the 1st of November, 1820. A missionary, visiting the hospital a few days after, while speaking to one of the patients, heard a most dreadful groan at a little distance, which seemed to proceed from one enduring great mental agony and bodily pain. On looking round, he saw the poor young man, and went to converse with him. His frame was greatly shattered by his disease, and his sufferings were very severe; but these appeared little compared to the terrors of his mind. The hand of God was upon him, and his eyes were opened, too late, as he thought, to his real condition. While he was in health, and death appeared at a distance, he could brave the warnings of conscience; but not so now. If there was a God, he knew he would punish him. If the Christian religion was true, it must condemn him; and, like Belshazzar, his strength was gone, "and his knees smote one against another" with fear and trembling. He now saw the sentence written against him, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." And neither his infidel principles, nor the cheers of his wicked companions, could impart any consolation to his terrified soul. Hence he continually cried out, "Lord, have mercy upon me. Lord be merciful unto me!" A pious young man, who was in the hospital at the same time, seeing his wretched and inconsolable condition, was desirous, if possible, of alleviating his sufferings; and removed his bed near to that of poor Rose, that he might attend and speak to him on the all-important subject of religion. Having done this, he asked Rose what made him so unhappy, and led him thus to cry for mercy? To which the unhappy man replied, "I cry for mercy, because I have awfully sinned; and I call upon Christ, because there is

no other name under heaven whereby I can be saved. I have before despised him, but if all the world were now mine, I would freely give it for the smallest hope of his favour, or for time for repentance!" The person above mentioned, for his encouragement, then spoke of the infinite love of God, in pardoning the greatest of sinners through the atonement of Christ, who died, the just for the unjust, to reconcile sinners to God; and of Christ being appointed to bind up the brokenhearted, to give liberty to the captive, and to open the prison to them that are bound, Luke v. 18. Hearing this, a ray of hope appeared to cheer his dark, despairing mind, and with tears he replied, "My guilt is great, but I will hope in his mercy, and trust in his promises. I know that my course of life has been contrary to his holy law, and I am worthy of death, but he has said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out,'" John vi. 37.

It is the glory of the Christian religion, that it can and does console and support the minds of believers in the midst of all the sufferings of human life. The infidel dashes the only cup of consolation from his lips, and prefers a cup, whose taste is at best but insipid, but which is more commonly a cup of wormwood and gall. The Christian, however, possesses a peace that "passeth all understanding;" being justified by faith, he has peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom v. 1.

There is one article of belief contained in the Bible which the infidel cannot expunge even from his meagre creed, which is, "It is appointed unto men once to die." The infidel must die as well as the believer, and the former in the hour of death needs consolation as well as the latter. And oh, that must be a poor system that can yield no comfort, when comfort is most desired!

From the time William Rose became awakened to a sense of his condition as a lost sinner, such an evident change was seen in the whole of his conduct and conversation, that all who knew him were astonished. He viewed his former conduct with grief and shame, and self-abhorrence. He wished only to talk about salvation, and what he should do to be saved. His views were completely changed. Those things which before were his glory, he now counted his shame; and those which he formerly despised, he now esteemed above all others. The

missionary, in his visits to him, was particularly pleased with his views of the exceeding sinfulness of sin as committed against a good, a holy, and righteous God; and his humble faith in the merits of Christ. He appeared to lay hold on the hope set before him as an almost drowned man lays hold on a plank or raft to save himself from a watery grave.

Some who knew him in the midst of his iniquities, may disbelieve that a person so depraved and hardened should in so short a time become a meek and spiritual disciple of Christ: but to this it may be said, that in the former part of his life he was favoured with many religious privileges, and that the Spirit of the Lord appeared to work mightily upon him. This will be further seen by his deep sorrow for sin, his earnest exhortation to his fellow-sinners, his patience, his delight in spiritual things, and by his faith, hope, and peace in his departing moments. His repentance appeared to be deep and genuine. Sometimes, when in great pain, he would exclaim, "What is all I suffer in comparison with what I deserve? And what is it compared to what Christ suffered for me? Nothing!" At another time, he said, "There are many who will be condemned at last, and surely I deserve to be one of them!" His friend observed that none were accepted on account of their own merits; all were guilty; and if we have proper views of our characters, we shall think ourselves to be the chief of sinners. "True, true," he answered, "but you do not know the extent of my crimes; and even now I feel my heart hard." He then broke out in prayer, "O Lord, soften my hard heart! do not let me deceive myself!" When he was once reminded of having embraced the principles of Paine; "Yes," he said, "I remember it with grief, that I should ever have been carried away with such delusions. I have read many books, but how ignorant I am of the truths of the Bible!" When a friend read to him one of Burder's "Village Sermons" on Repentance, he said, "he feared his repentance was not genuine," but observed, "that he was encouraged amidst all his fears by that hymn,

'Poor, weak, and worthless though I am,
I have a rich, almighty Friend;
Jesus, the Saviour, is his name,
He freely loves, and without end.'"

He requested that some of the cheering invitations and promises of the gospel should be read to him. His patience was very great; for though the least movement of his body pained him exceedingly, yet no murmuring word escaped his lips. His warnings to others against sin were impressive and pointed. He had been the means of leading many to the commission of vice, and was now anxious to reclaim them. His address to one of his comrades was striking: "Look at me," said he, "and behold the low and painful state into which I am brought; and this is the situation in which you intend to prepare for an eternal world. I have enough to do now to endure my bodily pains." He then with tears begged him not to leave the work of repentance till a dying hour, but in health and youth to seek the Lord.

The Bible and hymn-book were now his constant companions; and when he could not read them himself, he would ask an occasional visitor to do it for him. Once, when food was presented to him, he said, "I have other bread to eat;" referring to Christ as the bread of life. He spent much of his time in prayer. One day, being asked if he had not been sleeping, he replied, "No; I have been holding communion with God, in which I feel great pleasure. I expect to be awake the most of this night, and it rejoices me to think how happy I shall be when all is quiet, and I can meditate on the salvation of Christ without disturbance." He was not able to attend public worship from the commencement of his illness, and this he greatly lamented; an instance of which may be noticed: his friend inquiring if he could spare him to attend? "Yes, yes," he answered, "I would not have you stay away even to save my life; and would it not be possible for me to attend? I could sit a good while with a pillow to lean against. Could I not accompany you? I never had such a desire as I now feel to attend the public worship of God."

What multitudes are there in this "Christian land," who never attend a place of worship of any description! How many do we observe on a sabbath-day clothed in their working dress, sauntering about the streets, going to or returning from the alehouses, the fields, or their gardens; and thus declaring plainly whose they are, and whom they serve! defying the Almighty to his face,

trampling upon his sceptre, despising his laws, and by their conduct impiously saying, "Who is the Lord, that we should obey him?" And how many are there who devote the sacred day to reading the newspaper instead of the Bible, to visiting their acquaintances, to travelling, to every thing but the service of God! Let such remember, that there is a dreadful place in hell for sabbath-breakers! "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord." Let such persons learn a lesson from the anxiety this poor soldier discovered, even in his dying moments, to be conducted to the house of God.

Leaning on the neck of his friend while moving in bed, he said, "I am in great pain, but Christ is my support and comfort; and if I could lean upon him as I do upon you, my happiness would be complete." Upon one occasion, the shock of an earthquake being felt, many of the patients ran out of the hospital for safety, but this he was unable to do; and after the shock had subsided, being asked how his thoughts had been engaged during the alarm, he replied, "They were fixed upon Christ my hope and refuge."

A few days before his death, he was requested to take a little wine; but he declined, saying, "I wish to drink new wine in the kingdom of heaven;" alluding to the words of Christ to his disciples. On the 6th of January, 1821, two days prior to his dissolution, he was asked if he was happy? He said, "Yes, I am looking to Christ; for his friendship never fails." The missionary visited him on the morning of the 7th. His eyes appeared then as if covered with glassy scales; and his hearing was impaired. He welcomed his visitor with a low and faint voice; and when that friend took hold of his cold and clammy hand, and inquired if he knew him, he replied, "Yes." "Do you experience the consolations of religion in the trying hour?" He again replied, "Yes." In the afternoon of that day, he revived again, like a dying taper, for a short time, and requested some of his favourite hymns to be read. His friend said to him, "You seem happy;" "Yes," he answered, "the Lord has done great things for me." At three o'clock the ensuing morning, his friend assisted him to turn in his bed, after which he softly breathed out his soul into the hands of his Redeemer.

As to the manner in which his funeral was conducted, I know not; for on that morning, at six o'clock, we marched away from Berhampore, and left his body to be put into the ground by those who knew him not—the soldiers of his majesty's 17th regiment, who relieved us that day.

This account shows us the importance of religion, and the necessity of being prepared for death and judgment. Poor Rose had lived a sinner and an infidel, and he had well nigh died in that awful state, but was saved on the brink of ruin. When death approached him, he felt the horrors of his situation. The delusions of infidelity could not then pacify his troubled mind: he experienced that alarm which he had formerly ridiculed, and anticipated that eternal burning wrath which had been equally the subject of his contempt. His seemed a hopeless case, but God was rich in mercy to him, and, I trust, saved him, though at the "eleventh hour." But, if he did, presume not, reader, that you will find the same mercy when you are laid on your dying bed: for you know not when or where you may die. There may be no minister at hand, no pious neighbour to explain and exhibit to you the hope and consolations of the gospel; and if there should be, your mind may be distracted, and your heart hardened, and your prayers rejected. Oh, then, delay not to repent of sin, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! While there is life there is hope; but as life declines, hope diminishes. Few old men are saved who have not repented in their youth or prime; and still fewer dying men, if they neglected religion in health. Oh, then, "prepare to meet thy God." Remember DEATH—JUDGMENT—HEAVEN—HELL—ETERNITY!

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THE PILOT AND THE CAPTAIN.

DURING a summer's excursion to a celebrated watering place, the writer of this tract and a friend took a walk on the pier. The morning was particularly fine. The clearness of the sky, the wide expanse of the ocean, the motion of several boats in the distance on their return to the harbour, laden with fish; and, nearer, a number of men busily employed driving piles into the sea for the formation of a new pier, were objects which served to vary and beautify the surrounding scenery. Another that attracted attention was a pilot on the look out for vessels. He was singing that well-known hymn by Dr. Watts, which is so excellently adapted to a sea scene, "There is a land of pure delight," &c.

No little interest was excited by the idea that this pilot might perhaps be one of the many sailors who of late years have been brought under the preaching of the gospel, through the efforts made in this country in behalf of that numerous class of men; and that he was now substituting the songs of Zion in the room of those exceptionable compositions, which, for the most part, betray bad taste, and which both express and excite unholy feelings. It so happened that he approached the visitors, who took the opportunity of exchanging a few words; little thinking what a pleasure was in reserve for them.

Visitor. As you, pilot, have probably been across to the opposite coast, and have seen both France and Holland, will you be so kind as to tell us which you like best?

Pilot. I have been in both, sir, and can hardly say which I prefer; excepting, that on the sabbath days Holland is more like England; but in France, the people being chiefly Roman catholics, only a part of the day is spent religiously.

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Visitor. Then, I judge, pilot, you are not a Roman catholic yourself; and that you see the evil of breaking the Lord's day?

Pilot. Indeed, I am not a Roman catholic, sir; I hope, however, I am a christian, a follower of Jesus. Ah! sir, I was once a dreadful persecutor: I may say for nearly forty years. Why, sir, I used to lead my wife a wretched life for going to hear the word of God. She never dared to go but when I was out at sea. Sometimes I used to come home before she expected me, and then, poor creature, what a time she had of it, when I found she had been there! And yet she bore it all very patiently. I was one of the most daring, profligate fellows, sir, you have ever heard of. Oh the wonderful power of God! I now love his name and his people, wherever they are; and I love the Lord's day as the best of the seven.

Visitor. Do tell us what brought you to the knowledge of your state?

Pilot. It was first, sir, by hearing a good old minister in this town.

Visitor. But how came you to hear him?

Pilot. It was the Lord's time, sir; my good wife used often to go up into a loft when she thought I was from home, to pray for me, and I heard her sometimes when she did not know I was near. Frequently, too, she would try to get me to hear that minister.

Visitor. Had you not particular feelings when you heard her praying for you?

Pilot. No, sir; my heart was as hard as a rock; nothing seemed to move me. But one evening (you know, sir, sometimes our wives have great rule over us) she said, "Come with me to-night, will you? It is quite dark, and nobody will see you go." "No," I said, "but they will see me when I get there." However, at last she prevailed, and sure enough the minister laid it thick upon me; he spread it all out before me as exactly as if he had known my heart. I felt amazed, and hardly knew where I was. When I went home my wife said, "How did you like the minister?" I said, "Very well; only you, or somebody else, has been telling him all about me." She replied, "No, that is not the case."

Visitor. And did you soon, of your own accord, go again?

Pilot. I soon went again, but not very willingly. I must be urged. My wife asked me and I went. By degrees I was brought to see the state of my soul. The Lord took away my stony heart, and gave me a heart of flesh. My wicked companions I soon forsook. They scoffed and jeered me. I have had a great deal of persecution; but it does me good, for it sends me to my knees, and makes me recollect what a persecutor I was once myself. Now I would not part with my hope for ten thousand worlds.

Visitor. In your unconverted state you were, I suppose, often in storms at sea: how did you feel then?

Pilot. I have been often in great storms, but I feared nothing. I was like a lion, and more daring in the cause of the devil, than, I fear, I ever shall be zealous in the cause of God.

Visitor. Then you have no good works to plead before God?

Pilot. I good works, sir! No, it is all of grace. It is said in the scriptures, you know, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Titus iii. 5.) Also we read, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. ii. 8, 9.

Of this grace the pilot was, indeed, according to his own narrative, a striking example. Between fifty and sixty years of age, stout and commanding in his appearance, he was in his manners simple as a little child. While with great modesty he was relating the account of himself, the tear was often seen to start in his eye—that eye so long unused to weep, and which had been fierce as a lion's; and his once proud heart now seemed completely subdued by the love of Christ.

At this instant an elderly gentleman, venerable in his aspect, was passing, whom the pilot introduced by remarking, "He, too, is a follower of Christ." He was a captain, who had retired, after many changes in a seafaring life, on a respectable income, to spend the remainder of his days in a neat cottage, on a neighbouring cliff.

We entered into conversation with him, and, after various remarks, he said, "Well, I think, if one string in

heaven is louder than another, it will be mine, for I have been the chief of sinners.

Visitor. Why do you take such a view of your past character? If you will favour us with some account of yourself, we have a little leisure, and shall be glad to listen.

Captain. Sir, I was notoriously wicked. It was my lot to be chief mate on board a vessel bound to America. When we arrived at our port we had to unlade our cargo, and the negroes were employed on board many weeks in unlading and lading. Sir, I was a tyrant among them. In every way I could I harassed and distressed them. One day when walking on the shore in one of the woods, I heard a noise. I listened: it was one of the black men praying. When he finished I went up to him, and calling him by his name, said, "Why don't you come on board the ship?" "Oh! massey," he said, "dere be devil on board." "A devil on board!" I replied, "what do you mean? I don't understand you." "O massey, *you yourself* be dat devil;" and he began to talk to me in a way that I never forgot. His words stuck fast by me: I could not get rid of them. I began to pray soon myself, but did not at first say any thing to the men; but going up to them some days after, I said, "My boys," for we always call them boys, "why don't you pray in the ship? You go into the woods to pray; why don't you pray here?" "Oh! massey, white men no like pray, they no pray." I answered, "Well, go to the other end of the ship, where the hogs are; you may pray there, and nobody will take any notice of you." They did so, and began to pray in a low voice. At last they got on till they made the ship ring with their praying and singing. The next morning I thought, "Shall I call them? It is early, but if I don't call them, they will stop at prayer beyond the hour for them to go to work, and then they will get into trouble. I will even call them." I did so; and when they had begun, as usual, at the other end of the ship, I went to them, and fell on my knees. Dear me, how they did stare, and how they did pray for me! From that time I never omitted praying with them, and nobody can tell what I had to contend with in my cabin, and the persecution I had from my captain: but the Lord gave me comfort equal to my trial. I was enabled to pray as long as I remained in the ship.

Visitor. Was that long?

Captain. It was not long: for the captain was determined to get rid of a praying chief mate. It was a great loss to me, and very ill usage. When the time came for us to part he made a very lame apology; said he was sorry, but that it was too late to be altered, for he had engaged another. He confessed I had always done my duty as chief mate. But my poor negroes were almost broken-hearted. They crowded around me. Another party offered to give me a put off; I said, "No, my own poor boys must do that." They directly jumped into the boat, and began to row me to shore. I felt distressed. I knew not which way to go after they had left me. I was in a strange country, without friends, and knew not how I was ever to reach England; but I prayed to God to help me, and lifting up my eyes, I saw at a distance, a cottage, I walked up to the door, found it open, and I went in with a sorrowful heart. No one was there; a small book was on a shelf, and I cast my eyes on these words in it:—

> Peace, troubled soul, thou needst not fear;
> Thy Great Provider still is near;
> Who fed thee last will feed thee still;
> Be calm, and sink into his will.

This is between forty and fifty years ago, and I have never been able to find these lines in any book since. Well, they appeared as the voice of God to my soul, and are a great comfort to me to this day under dark providences. Soon after some of the family came in. They did all they could to cheer me, and would not let me leave them till after four or five days. Then they conducted me to another plantation, and from that to another, till I was conveyed by them out of the country. Ah! sir, I have had many great deliverances, have often been in perils at sea, but I have had many mercies, and now here I am with what Agur prayed for, "neither poverty nor riches," (Prov. xxx. 8,) but a comfortable income.

Visitor. We most sincerely thank you for this very interesting narrative. I presume you have a family, who occasionally hear from you an account of these remarkable dealings of God with you in his providence.

Captain Sir, I have been twice married, and have been blessed with two excellent wives. My first was an eminent

christian. I never saw her ruffled by any thing, however adverse. All the time I lived with her she was always calm. I had a vessel of my own, and a cabin was fitted up for her and our children. One day a French vessel came alongside and boarded us. In the course of the day, finding they had but a few hands on board, I projected a plan for taking them, and thereby freeing myself. I had several north country-women on board, who, I had no doubt, would work as well as men; and to them I made known my plan. They all agreed to it, and said they would do their utmost. My men said the same. I had no doubt of any but a stout Italian, and of him I was afraid. I proposed that we should pinion him, and take the French by surprise. We wanted our liberty; indeed that was nearly our all. When every thing was arranged, I felt pleased, made known my plan to my wife. She broke out into this exclamation, "'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.' (Rom. xii. 19.) Don't, my dear, take it into your own hands; leave it in the hands of the Lord." On hearing this, you might have knocked me down with a feather. I was calm, and gave up all my scheme directly, and was enabled to eave it all with the Lord. She went on to say, "You have thought a great deal about losing this vessel, and your pro perty. Why even now we are better off than thousands are. You know when we get our liberty we have a house that we can go to immediately." At another time, when we were out at sea in a great storm, I had no hope of saving the ship, and thought if I could but lash my wife and children to some of the rigging, they would stand a better chance of escaping. I went to her in the cabin: the things were dashing about. She had stowed the children and herself so that they had escaped being bruised. "Here, my dear," said she, as cool and collected as possible, "we will stop and wait the event."

Visitor. Probably you still have many children; or have you lost any by death?

Captain. Sir, I have lost some of my children. One of my sons, a fine youth, was captain of a vessel at a great distance from me. Having heard he was ill, I went to see him. As soon as I came, he said, "O father, are you come? I expected my sister." "Yes, my dear," I replied, and now I am come, I must tell you, you are not long for this world. I can see you are reduced to a skeleton, and

are going off just like your poor brother. Have you thought bout eternity?" He was thoughtful at that. I went to prayer with him. Then a bed was brought into the same cabin, and I lay by the side of his. In a little time the physician and another medical gentleman, knew what I had been saying. They told me it was wrong. "What," said I, "shall I see my own child standing on a dreadful precipice, and not tell him of his state?" I continued several days praying and talking with him. At last he said, "Father, it is too late now." "My dear child," I said, "did you never read that one of the two thieves crucified with Jesus Christ found mercy at the eleventh hour? Pray for mercy." "But, father, I can't pray," he said; "when I try, the thoughts of my ship and of other things come into my mind, so that I can't pray." "Well, my dear," I answered, "continue to use words; the great enemy of souls is trying to keep you from God, and to destroy your soul." The physician ordered the bed I slept on to be taken away. When I entered the room it was gone. I inquired the reason. "Well," said I, "my child, if they won't let me have a bed to sleep on, I will lie down on these boards, for I am determined not to leave you." The bed was again brought in. At last my dear boy used to beg of me, to pray and sing with him, and said, "O father, when you came I was sorry, for I hoped it was my sister had come; and if she had it might have been bad. Her companions and mine took me to the play as long as I had strength to stand, and when I could not go there, they would come and lead me between two of them to the card table, till the cards have fallen out of my hands. I was so weak I could not hold them." By degrees he was brought to see his state as a sinner, and felt an increasing earnestness about his soul. It was thought proper to try what effect removing him from the ship would produce. Matters were arranged for that purpose; but the night before he was to have been brought on shore he departed this life rejoicing in the Lord.

The time having arrived that it was necessary the visitors should leave the pilot and captain, the narrative here ended. On the latter taking them by the hand, and saying, "Remember me when it is well with thee;" their hearts responded, "Is it possible we can forget persons with whom we have had a meeting so interesting and so unexpected?"

From the history of the Pilot and the Captain the reader may see the great importance of real religion. That the mere circumstance of birth in a christian land does not make a man a christian, is clear enough from what the poor negroes so truly said to the chief mate—"White men no like pray; they no pray." Besides this, they could not compare, as they thought, his conduct to them to any thing more fitly than to that of "a devil!" What a sight—praying negroes thus reproving a prayerless, wicked, persecuting Englishman! Real religion is a new heart from God.* Jesus Christ calls it a being born again.† A person who has been born again is concerned about the salvation of his soul. He comes as a poor sinner to Christ in faith and prayer; and while he sees he can be saved only by the merits of the Redeemer, and trusts in his atonement as the only ground of his acceptance with God, he hates sin with a perfect hatred, and desires to walk before the Lord in holiness and righteousness all his days. He has new views and feelings concerning sin, himself, the people and worship of God. His company, language, pursuits, pleasures, and practices, are all different from what they were before, and explain those words, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."‡ Well might the captain feel so anxious that his dying son might become such a new creature before he left the world—knowing, as he did, that his everlasting salvation depended on the change.

Reader, perhaps some one has these anxious feelings on your account. What are your own feelings? No one's anxiety can be of avail to you, if you be unconcerned yourself. If you are a new creature in Christ, you may say with the pilot, "I would not part with my hope for ten thousand worlds." But if, on the contrary, you live and die without believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, you always must have something to mar your happiness here, and besides that, your soul will be lost for ever!

* Ezek. xxxvi. 26. † John iii. 7. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 17.

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THE PHARISEE.

THE pharisees, of whom we read so much in the New Testament, paid great attention to outward observances, and were very strict in the performance of many duties: they had the highest opinion of themselves, trusting in their fancied goodness, and scorning others. Characters of the same description may be found in our days, and in all ranks of society. I shall give some particulars of one.

A short time ago, I was requested to visit a poor woman occupying the garret of a house in Mary-le-bone parish, who stood in need of pecuniary assistance, as well as of religious advice, as I was told. Up three pair of stairs, in a small but clean room, and on a very decent bed, I found the old woman, apparently in her last sickness: for she had been confined some time, and did not seem likely to get better: and she assured me she did not expect it. After speaking with her some time of her temporal wants, and bodily ailments, and inquiring what could best be done for her in this respect, I took an opportunity, from her assuring me she should very soon die, to introduce a more important subject—the concerns of her soul. I asked her if the thought that she should soon die gave her any uneasiness. She answered, None at all; why should a poor creature wish to live, who had nothing to live for; and nothing to live upon but the parish allowance of half-a-crown a week? And what good was it to live in pain and sickness upon that bed, with nobody to care for, and nobody to care for her? the world had been to her a world of sorrow; she had had a hard portion. It was quite time she should go out of it; and let death come when it would, it would be a happy release.

I replied, "This is very true, and I do not see that in this dark and lonely garret you have much about you that you need wish to stay by. But I do not so well perceive why you call death a 'happy release;' as if there were no more in it, for better or worse, than to bring the concerns of this life to an end. Whereas it is in fact either the

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beginning of eternal sorrows, infinitely greater than any we can suffer here; or the beginning of eternal joys, to which the word 'release' cannot be very well applied. To vary my question, therefore— Since you have no wish to live, have you any fear to die?"

"Fear! no, God be praised. I have nothing to be afraid of. I have been a virtuous woman all my life, I was not always so poor as I am now. I was very well brought up. I have done nobody any harm. My father and mother were honest people, and my dear husband, dear soul, he kept me well while he lived. They are all gone to heaven, and I am quite ready to go after them."

"These," I said, "are things for which to be thankful, supposing they are true. But are you in the habit of reading the Bible?"

"Dear me! ma'am," she answered, rather angrily, "I am not the poor ignorant creature you take me for; I had very good schooling in my youth; my father was very well to do in the world. Read! why I have almost forgotten it now to be sure, but I could read French once."

"Very likely," I said; "but that is not exactly what I mean. Some good things may be read in French, and more bad ones; but I want to know if you have read your Bible."

"To be sure I have," returned my old friend, waxing still warmer as we proceeded; "I kept my church, and said my prayers night and morning since the day I was born almost, and that is more than sixty years; I am not likely to forget it now, I think. To be sure, I have not been able to go to church this winter, because I could not get out of my bed. But God does not require us to do what we cannot; He knows I served him while I was able, and he will reward me for it. Merciful God! He will make me amends for all my sufferings here. He is all goodness, blessed be his holy name!

I interrupted her with asking if she found any comfort in reading her Bible on her sick bed.

"Comfort! to be sure; it is all the comfort I have. Where should I find any other, poor miserable creature as I am? O yes, there is the comfort; I have had all my sufferings in this world; and I shall have my recompense hereafter."

"And may I ask," I said, "if you now find any comfort in prayer?"

"Yes, yes; I never was used to neglect my prayers; my

father used to hear us say the Lord's prayer and the belief every night before we went to bed. And now I find the good of it. Some poor creatures cannot pray, because they never have been taught it. Thanks be to God, he has been very good to me in all this. I do not sleep of a night, and I can think of God, and pray to him, though I cannot kneel down. He does not regard that. He looks at the heart, and He knows I always knelt down when I could. There's many a one that never prays, God forgive them!"

"My friend," I said, "do you ever in your prayers ask God to forgive you your sins?"

"My sins!—to be sure I do. I dare say I have committed many sins. We are all sinners, every one of us. We are apt to be thoughtless when we are young, and I dare say I was. But I was always a steady girl, as the world goes. I was never a bad liver any way. I earned my money honestly, and spent it properly, when I had it, and now I have come to want, I have not murmured. I know that God does all for the best. And I did not bring these troubles upon myself. I thank God I have a clear conscience; and I have borne them patiently."

"But you do not think you have deserved them, or that you deserve any punishment in the world to come?"

"No, ma'am, I don't remember that ever I did any thing to deserve affliction. It is not those that prosper in this life that deserve the best. I dare say you have read about the rich man and Lazarus. I was reading it last night, and to be sure it did seem to suit my case exactly. Blessed be God!"

"Stay a little," I said. "You have blessed God for a great many things; but there seems to me to be one thing you have forgotten. Do you ever thank God for the Saviour Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save us from our sins?"

The old woman did not answer, looking as if she were at a loss what to say.

"As you read the Bible so much," I continued, "you of course know who Jesus Christ is, and what he did upon the earth."

"O yes; know, to be sure. Ah! his sufferings were greater than mine. Those jews were a wicked set; but they have had their reward. We all have our deserts sooner or later. God reigns over all. The wicked shall not escape."

"But, my friend," I said, again interrupting her volubility, "you do not seem to feel any interest in the death of Christ. Do you not know what he died for?"

"What for! Did not Christ die for us all? poor as well as rich—jews and gentiles, we are all equal there, at any rate. Yes, yes, Christ died for us all."

This was said in so careless and unconcerned a manner, that I could not but fear the poor old creature attached no meaning to her words, and I hardly knew how to proceed with her. At length I said, "Does the thought of this afford you any comfort on your sick bed?"

"Yes, indeed. Many a time when I am in pain I think of Christ, and how he suffered, and then I am ashamed to complain. He never deserved to suffer."

"But do you feel ashamed also to have been the cause of his sufferings by the wickedness which——"

She interrupted me with, "Ay, indeed, it is a wicked world. I have seen enough of it. Thank God, I have been kept from sinning as some do. We must all sin, you know, in a manner, because the Bible says we are sinners. But I have nothing to reproach myself with. I can look back upon my life with thankfulness for——"

"I am afraid," said I, taking out my pocket Bible, "you are under a great mistake on the subject of your thankfulness, though I admit it is good to be thankful. Did you ever hear of David?"

"What, the king of Israel? he that wrote the Psalms? I could say many of them by heart once; but my memory is gone. Thank God, I used it properly when I had it. I learned in a catechism, too, that David was a man after God's own heart. Yes, I know. A wonderful man David was."

"You think it probable, then, that David was as good as you are?"

"As good as I am! You don't suppose I fancy myself as good as those holy men we read about in Scripture. As good as David that wrote all those beautiful psalms, and was taken from the sheepfold to be king, and killed Goliath with a stone! All because he trusted in God, and because God loved him. No, no, I am not such a fool as that either. I have often wished I could be like David. But there—we must be thankful for what we have—I might have been——"

"Very well," I said, "I am glad you know so much

about David, as I am going to read you what he says of himself in the 40th psalm, ver. 12. 'Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me.' Again, in the 51st psalm, ver. 1—3. 'Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.' And again, in the 116th psalm, ver. 3, 4, he says, 'The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold on me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul.' Now, my friend," I added, "you see that David did not think so well of himself as you do."

I paused; but for this time my companion showed no disposition to speak. I looked at her, and saw that for the first time her eyes had filled with tears. Encouraged by this first appearance of feeling, I proceeded to read more of the holy psalmist's account of himself. I pointed out to her the contrast of his language with hers. His deep contrition for past iniquity; his sense of sin and weakness still remaining in him; his prayers to be pardoned and made holy; his expressions of gratitude to God for undeserved mercies; and the sort of consolation so different from her's with which he supported himself in the day of suffering, and in the prospect of death. The old woman continued silent. She seemed affected. Perhaps she repented, confessed her unworthiness, and took refuge in the Saviour. I do not know.

How much did this poor woman resemble the pharisees of our Saviour's time! She believed a great deal of what was true. She seemed grateful for her good things, and took her troubles patiently. She certainly read her Bible, and remembered a great deal of what was in it; and I have no doubt that she did, as she said, say her prayers very often. Many people would think this was having a great deal of religion; perhaps some may think it was enough, and all that God requires; and that she really was as she thought herself, ready to go to heaven. But after all, what had she more than the pharisees of old? They believed as much as she did; and were even more strict in their devotions. Yet the pharisees were not

justified by our Lord on this account. And what is more remarkable, Christ was as little valued by this woman as he was by them. Perhaps she believed him to be the Son of God, which the pharisees did not; but if she did, that only made her indifference the more culpable. However that might be, it was plain she cared very little about him; and though she talked of his sufferings, she felt no shame for having caused them by her sins, and no gratitude for his death: and ready as she was to bless God for her own goodness, as the pharisee did in his prayer, she never thought to bless him for making atonement for her sins. And how should she? She was not sure whether she had any sins. Between her sufferings and her services she thought she had fully earned heaven for herself: and as to hell it never seems to have entered her mind that she was in any danger of it. What then could she want with a Saviour? Just as little as the pharisees of old. If I had talked to her about the merit of being patient, the happiness that awaited her after death, and the support and comfort God had promised to the afflicted, she would have heard me gladly, and been very well pleased with my discourse. But when I spoke of the forgiveness of sins, she became almost angry; and when I spoke of Christ as the sinner's only hope, she scarcely understood what I meant.

We are not called upon to decide on the eternal destiny of the old woman in the garret in Mary-le-bone parish. but this we are obliged, on the testimony of Scripture, to believe, that—"There is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved," but the name of Jesus Christ. If a person could be saved in whole or in part, by his own works, his own devotions, his own patience, his own prayers and praises, or even by the mercy of God without an atonement, this text would be contradicted; there would be many names by which a man might be saved, and consequently many Saviours. Another Scripture says, "Except ye repent, ye can in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Now a pharisee does not repent; because repentance implies a strong conviction of sin, and grief because of it, and a determination to turn from it. It implies that we feel sin to be "exceedingly sinful," and that we know ourselves to be guilty of it, and are burdened with the sense of it. This cannot be the case with one who justifies himself, excuses himself, and thanks God for his own goodness. Thus the expectation of a pharisee that he shall go to heaven because

he is good, or because he is better than others, opposes the word of God; for St. Paul says, "We have proved both jew and gentile," which comprises all mankind, "that they are all under sin. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is one that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

It is very common for people of a pharisaic spirit to admit all this; to own that they have committed some sin; but not enough to merit condemnation, or to be uneasy about; it is the weakness of their original nature, and will be excused. This again is to deny the Scripture; which says, that if a man break the law in one point, he is guilty of the whole; that is, as much condemned as if he had broken the whole! and with good reason; because if man is to be justified by his obedience to God, he must obey Him in all that he commands, not in a part.

Driven out of this refuge, the pharisee next takes comfort in the goodness of God; and says, that though he may not exactly have merited heaven by his works, yet since he has done his best, God will bountifully bestow it upon him. But the word of God says nothing of the kind; nothing about people that do their best; because, in fact, there are no such people. If this had been any ground of justification, or any ground of encouragement, St. Paul, after having shown that all were sinners, and all under condemnation, would have gone on to say, "Blessed are they who are better than others, blessed are they who have done their best." Instead of this, he says almost immediately after, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."

There is another sort of pharisaism that is not uncommon, perhaps it is the commonest of any—where christianity is professed, and people hear too much about their sins to be quite unconscious of them. They have an idea that whatever their guilt may be, they can make up for it by prayers, and charities, and devotions, and something that they call repentance. Looking upon the sins of their past life, they think they can make atonement for them, and secure a pardon for themselves, by going often to church, receiving the sacrament, reading the Bible, praying regularly, giving alms to the poor, and what they call "repenting;" that is, leading a more decent life for the time to come.

Thus, though they acknowledge they have not always been righteous, and have not always been deserving of heaven, they can become so whenever they please, and even make atonement for what is past.

This brings us to the most important consideration of the whole. Persons of this description, indeed pharisees of all descriptions, do really, as the Scripture says, make the death of Christ of none effect; they make it unnecessary. If man has either so much goodness in himself that he can escape hell and deserve heaven by his conduct; or so much power that with a little forbearance and a little help from God, a few prayers, and a few tears, and a few good resolutions, he can avert all the consequences of his sin; the sacrifice and death of Christ were unavailing and unnecessary. The Son of God need not have left the bosom of his Father, and his throne in glory, to become the servant of servants, to bear the sins, and suffer the punishment, and ransom the souls of his people. He need not have lived on earth, or died upon the cross, to make reconciliation between man and his God. And it is but too plain that all pharisees are of this opinion, though they may not acknowledge it.

Reader, what is your character? If you are trusting in your own heart, Scripture has pronounced you a fool, Prov. xxviii. 26. If you are confiding in your own good works for salvation, you are seeking a refuge of lies. Build no longer on the sand. Behold the sure foundation which God has laid for our salvation in the death and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Flee to him for refuge, rest all your hopes on him, obtain salvation from his cross, live to his glory, and die rejoicing in Christ and him crucified. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world," Gal. vi. 14.

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Considerable Allowance to Subscribers and Booksellers.

POOR NANNY;

A TRUE ACCOUNT OF A YOUNG WOMAN, IN GREAT POVERTY AND SUFFERING.

THE following narrative illustrates that scriptural truth, "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

In a retired cottage there lived an aged couple, poor but industrious. They had brought up several children, who were settled in the world; and only one daughter remained with them to be the companion of their old age; but she was a great comfort, and in some measure their support, though long and severely afflicted.

Nanny, for so they called her, bid fair to have been a fine young woman, she had a pleasing countenance, good understanding, and cheerful mind; but before she reached the age of eighteen, "the hand of God touched" her, and affliction became her lot to the end of her days. Alas! how fading is youth,—its beauty may soon wither, and its strength die! Let not the young forget that the seeds of mortality are sown in them, and may soon put forth their fruit; for sin has infected their nature, and "from sin came death with all its woes."

Seventeen years and a half this young woman was confined to her father's cottage, and never able to go abroad, except when drawn out in a wheeled chair; but the Lord had mercy upon her, and early revealed himself to her mind. In her childhood she had been taken to the house of God, where the gospel was preached, which was made the power of God unto her salvation; and soon after, if not before her affliction, the fruit of it began to appear. She had a deep conviction of sin, and great abhorrence of it;

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she was laid very low in her own eyes, and much abased before God, under a sense of her guilty, lost, and ruined condition. She strongly felt the need, importance, and excellence of Divine mercy, for which she ardently prayed: but she pleaded no merit of her own for it; had no dependence upon the work of her own hands, or any thing she felt in herself. All her plea was the merits of the Lord Jesus, and all her hope was in him; his atonement was the joy of her heart, his love the theme of her song, and his prevailing intercession the sweet source of her consolation. It was truly delightful to hear, and never shall I forget, how she would magnify the grace of the Saviour, in living and dying for sinners; and especially for her. Her countenance would beam as with a heavenly ray, while she spoke of his love. "Oh!" she frequently exclaimed, "what compassion that he should look upon me, that he should have mercy upon me, that he should die for me, that he should receive me; such a poor creature as I am: I can never love him enough, never serve him here as I would!" Thus, by faith, she realized her interest in Christ, and enjoyed much of that "peace which passeth all understanding."

Her christian friends were highly esteemed, and always welcomed at her humble abode; not so much for the temporal relief they afforded, though that was always received with gratitude, as for the spiritual good she derived from their conversation and prayers, for which she was exceedingly thankful: and not only did she receive, but she imparted pleasure and profit to others. Such a sweet savour of heavenly things ran through all her conversation, as gladdened the hearts of many who visited her. Her cottage was indeed a Bethel,—The Lord was with her: content sat smiling on her brow, gratitude flowed from her lips, and the spirit of piety pervaded all her deportment. It was truly delightful to see with what patience she endured her long confinement and severe sufferings. No one ever heard her murmur or repine under the dispensations of God; but she would often say, "He does all things well." It was impossible for any who "knew the grace of God in truth," not to feel their minds refreshed, and their hearts warmed, while she talked of the pleasures of religion, the preciousness of a Saviour, and the joys of heaven.

The Bible was her constant companion, and very dear to

her. "What," she would say with much energy, "What should I do without my Bible? I think I could not live without my Bible." This precious book cheered her soul in the greatest depths of poverty and woe. It made solitude sweet, and the years, the many years of confinement easy. Her mind was richly stored with its sacred truths; and she drank largely at its streams of consolation. Of her it might be said, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." For "the meek shall inherit the earth; the meek shall eat and be satisfied."

But Nanny was not idle or useless, for she kept a little school, and took in needlework. This was very acceptable to the farmers and cottagers living around her. It being a secluded spot, far from town or village, there was no other place to which they could so well send their children to school; so that either from pity to her condition, or for their own convenience, they were glad to employ her, and place their little ones under her care: for she had taught herself to work remarkably neat, and could read tolerably well. This too was a help to herself, and her aged parents; for they had all become dependent upon parish allowance, which was indeed small. At one time the daughter had only sixpence a week, never more than eighteen pence, (that too in dear times,) and the old people two shillings and sixpence each; and out of this poor pittance, with the little earnings of the daughter, they had forty shillings a year to pay for the rent of their cottage. But so careful were these poor people in well husbanding their little all, that they never were behind in paying their rent. Knowing the difficulties they had to contend with, the landlord has often expressed his surprise to find the old man punctual to the day and hour with his money; for such was the good influence of right principles, whatever deprivations they suffered, none suffered loss by them: nor were they troublers of others. The bitterness of complaint was never heard in their humble abode. It was no scene of discord, or discontent; no reflections were cast upon each other as the cause or aggravation of their sufferings, but all was harmony and love. If, at any time, the old people did speak of their difficulties, which would sometimes happen, or express their fears, the afflicted daughter became their comforter, and would softly say

"Never mind, the Lord will provide; I have no doubt he will send us help." Thus would she soothe the minds of her tender parents, and her faith rose above fear; nor was she disappointed, for the Lord raised them up many friends, who ministered to their necessities.

One of her little scholars has frequently become a beggar to her mother for this suffering family, she knew much of their wants, and "felt pity work within." "Do, mother," she would say, "let me carry them something; poor things they have nothing to eat, but a little bit of bread or potatoe! and my mistress is so bad! you cannot think how bad she is!" Thus would this little one plead for them, nor did she ever plead in vain. Her kind sympathy won upon the heart of a tender mother;—and what mother could have resisted it? When her desire was obtained, she hastened with delight to the habitation of want, making glad the hearts of the needy. Many a time has the "blessing of them that were ready to perish" come upon her. She felt the meaning of those words, though perhaps but just able to read them, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

But the employment of her school was not more a work of necessity with Nanny, than it was of delight. She took pleasure in the instruction of the young, and was not satisfied with simply teaching them to read, but was anxious to impress their minds with the sacred truths of God's word, by gentle and persuasive means. Love reigned in all her actions, and it was very pleasing to see what influence she had over her little flock. She won upon their tender hearts, and ruled by kindness, not by terror. Some that are now grown up in life, and others who are following after, still remember her with pleasure and affection. And who can tell but that the seed which was sown by this humble, obscure, and suffering disciple of Jesus, may bring forth fruit to eternal life!

Being far from any regular place of worship, her sabbaths were spent in retirement, where she enjoyed much of the Divine presence and blessing; yet, like David, she longed for the courts of the Lord's house, and would sometimes say, "If I could but get to the house of the Lord, I think I should be so happy!" But so fearful was she of offending against God, by any seeming complaint, that even for this lamentation, she would soon chide herself,

by saying, " But I ought not to murmur, I know it is the Lord's will, and I should submit. The Lord is very kind to me, and gives me many sweet sabbaths at home." Thus did she bow to the will of the Lord, and acknowledge her obligations for every token of his favour. This was true submission, and patient endurance. How it made the grace of God to shine, and brought a rich reward! Well did an apostle say, " We count them happy who endure :" many suffer, but through restless impatience, they know not the happiness of endurance.

Sometimes she had the gospel brought home to her, as neighbouring ministers occasionally preached in the cottage, or a barn in the yard. These were seasons of great pleasure to her, and the ministers were received as angels of the Lord. Her thankfulness for such services was warm and sincere. While the tears started from her eyes, which glistened with delight, she earnestly besought them to come again. To her the preaching of the gospel was indeed sweet, the joy and rejoicing of her heart. Like good seed cast into good ground, it brought forth much fruit. Her soul was well prepared to receive it, and no ill humours of the mind prevented her profiting. She went hungering, and was filled; thirsting, and was not sent empty away. She always seemed to enjoy it, feed upon it, and to be refreshed by it. How good is it preaching to such hearers! The word drops upon their minds as the gentle rain upon the new mown grass, and distils as the dew upon the tender herb.

It was on one of those occasions I saw her for the last time. She was too weak to be carried into the barn to hear the preaching, which was a great disappointment; but she calmly submitted to the will of the Lord, saying, " Do not forget me,—pray for me,—I think I cannot be long here,—I shall soon get to my Father's house,—I want to be there,—but I would not, I desire not to be impatient." Thus did her soul stand in a waiting posture; no fears, no dread, but heaven already dawning upon her mind.

After the service, I again went in and spoke to her. " Well," said I, " and what can now be done for you to make your condition more easy and comfortable? Would ——" but, stopping me short, she exclaimed with a holy pleasure, " I would not change with any one." All around

looked with wonder and admiration, to hear such a poor sufferer, in abject poverty, exclaim, "I would not change with any one." This, thought I, is religion indeed: what but the grace of God could do this? How many in the vigour of health, surrounded with comforts, and even possessing riches, have not attained such a spirit, as to wish no change with any one: but here was one having nothing estimable of this life, who envied none! So much of God and heaven filled her soul, she wanted nothing more; and she was only waiting till the thin veil of flesh was drawn aside to possess the full blaze of glory.

She continued her school till within a fortnight of her death; when, no longer able to sit up, she would have the "little dears," as she used to call them, to her bed-side, and teach them: nor was she more willing to have them, than they were to go; for they would hardly be restrained from it, when she became too weak to hear them read. An instance or two of the children's attachment, may not be unworthy of notice.

One little girl who was early put under her care, never appeared more happy than with her mistress; though she had kind friends and a comfortable home, she was always ready to leave it for school, and never in haste to return, often stopping after school-time was over to wait upon poor Nanny: and to the last this child was a constant attendant. When she could no longer be taught, she would pay her daily visits, and do any kind offices in her power; until Nanny's happy spirit took its flight to the realms of bliss. This it did on a sabbath morning: delightful sabbath, no doubt, to her soul, who had been so long in waiting for the coming of her Lord; and when he came, she was ready to enter in to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Another child, who had a great desire to see her mistress when dead, prevailed on her mother to go with her: after looking attentively at the lifeless corpse for some time, she said, "Mother, may I kiss my mistress? I should like to kiss her again!" and she embraced the cold, pale, but apparently smiling cheek. So sweet were the charms of religion in her, that even death had lost his terrors! And so deep was the hold she had of the heart of this little one, that she became to her lovely even in death.

Not long after her departure, I again visited the cottage.

It was an affecting and interesting scene: there was the mother, a sister, and niece, who gave me a hearty welcome. I looked around, but poor Nanny was gone. There stood her old arm chair, in which she had spent many happy hours, and offered up many prayers, some, I thought for me. There was her old table, on which used to lie the book of books—the Bible, which she esteemed above all price. These, to me, were pleasing memorials of one, with whom I had spent some pleasant moments; and whose happy spirit now seemed to hover over us, while we talked of her joys below, and joys above; for we appeared to forget her past sorrows, in the thought of her joys. "Oh!" said the old woman, "I wish, sir, you could have seen her again, she so wished to see you!" and I wished so too, but an allwise God had otherwise appointed. The old man was not there, but I learnt that he was almost inconsolable for their loss. Who would have thought that the absence of such a helpless individual, could have been a loss in society! Yet so it was to this family; they had lost her aid, her counsels, and her cheering conversation, in all which they had found her useful to them.

Once more I addressed the throne of grace in this hallowed cottage, while all present wept around me, and then took leave of the bereaved family, with many good wishes. The feelings I then had will not soon be forgotten. "Truly," said I to myself, "it is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting."

How does this plain and simple statement of facts bespeak the great worth of religion, and the advantage of possessing it early! Oh that the young would make it their first concern! they will find no pleasures equal to those which it yields.

Happiness, we see, depends not upon outward circumstances, but on the heart being right with God, a true and saving knowledge of Christ, and a good hope of heaven: these will bring contentment in poverty, support in suffering, and joy in death; as they did to poor Nanny.

Usefulness in life, is confined to no rank, no station, no circumstances: the poor, the feeble, and the afflicted, as well as the rich, the healthy, and the young, may bear their part in it. How many, indeed, are there who have health, and large possessions, who do not live to so much good purpose,

or for so much usefulness to others, as the poor sufferer, whose life has been recorded.

What a day of wonders will that be, when all the mysteries of Providence shall be unfolded, and the heirs of salvation shall all come forth! Then multitudes who dwelt in obscurity here, and passed through seas of trial, shall find their faith to be "unto honour and praise and glory, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." And how many on that day who were thought little of here below, will sit among the highest on the throne in glory! of such, perhaps, will poor Nanny ——— be.

Though the heart that sorrow chideth,
Sink in anguish and in care;
Yet, if patience still abideth,
Hope shall paint her rainbow there.

Hope's bright lamp her light shall borrow
From religion's blessed ray,
And from many a coming morrow
Charm the clouds of grief away.

Wherefore should we sigh and languish,
Since our cares so soon shall cease?
And the heart that sows in anguish,
Shall hereafter reap in peace.

This is not a scene of pleasure,
These are not the shores of bliss:
We shall gain a brighter treasure,
Find a dearer land than this.

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Considerable Allowance to Subscribers and Booksellers.

LITTLE NELLY.

ELEANOR SIMMONS was born in the parish of W——y, in the year 1816. The mother of this poor infant was a woman of the most profligate and abandoned habits. Her child was the offspring of her licentiousness, and became, in consequence, as is frequently the case, the object of her mother's abhorrence. That she might be relieved from the charge of her support, she, more than once, attempted to take her life; and, in addition to more open violence, has been known to leave her for two or three days together in barns and outhouses, while she was pursuing her occupation as a seller of matches, &c., about the neighbourhood. During these periods the child has sometimes been found in such a state of helplessness as to be unable to defend her scanty pittance of food from the rats and other vermin that infested the place. Her unnatural mother, however, was frustrated in these attempts at her destruction. The end of this woman was most awful. She had kindled a fire, as was her custom, by the side of the public road, and while preparing to cook her victuals, fell into the flames, and was burnt so as to cause her death within a short time after. The subject of this memoir, then about seven years old, was the only witness of this dreadful occurrence; her cries attracted some persons to the spot, but too late to render any effectual assistance.

Little Nelly, as she was usually called, was removed, on the death of her mother, to the parish poor-house, an abode in which she was appointed to remain during the brief period of her life. Here she derived her first instruction in that knowledge which, we trust, made her wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. She had been rendered incurably a cripple by her mother's violence; and deprived of the sight of one eye, and nearly so of the other, by her mother's neglect. Though her capacity was equal to that of most children, she was, up to this period, totally unacquainted with the very first principles of religion. Though, on her entrance into the poor-house she was

carefully taught these, by the mistress of that establishment, it does not appear, for some years after her admission, that any serious impressions were produced. It is only from her conduct and feelings during the latter part of her life, that we are enabled to trace the workings of Divine grace in her heart.

Little Nelly had been about four years in her new habitation when the formation of an abscess, in addition to other diseases, threatened soon to bring her to the grave. She lingered, however, in this condition about two years, during the whole of which time, three days only excepted, she was confined to her bed in a state of almost entire helplessness. It was under these circumstances that she first attracted the notice of the writer, who has often borne witness to her patience and resignation under her complicated disorders, and with delight recognized the power of that gospel by which she was supported. Though she seldom mentioned her own sufferings, yet she would sometimes burst into tears at the thoughts of the wearisome attendance, which, from her weak state, she necessarily required from the mistress of the poor-house, by whom she was ever treated with the kindness of a parent. When asked whether she suffered much pain, she would reply, "Yes, I am in pain, but I can never suffer so much as my dear Saviour suffered for me." She would sometimes add, "If it is not wrong, I could wish that it might please the Lord to take me to himself, but I am afraid of wishing it, for fear he should be angry with me for being impatient." To an ignorant person who once said to her, when she was expressing sorrow for her sins, that it was not to be supposed that one so young could have any sins to answer for, she replied in a way that at once discovered great tenderness of conscience, and a deep sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin in the sight of an infinitely pure and holy God. She knew that "the wages of sin is death," and though she had joyfully fled for refuge to Him who came to save sinners, yet the offences even of her childhood, when brought, in after years, to her recollection, kept her humble, and penitent, and self-abased. Her having formerly listened with complacency, and without rebuking it, to the evil language of her wicked companions, was a sore burden upon her conscience, as she thereby considered and confessed herself to have been a partaker of their sins. Among her other evil habits was that of falsehood, to

which indeed she was in a manner compelled by the commands of her mother—commands too often enforced by personal violence. Yet her having yielded to this sin was a source of much subsequent uneasiness, and a painful subject of her frequent thoughts. Oh! that those to whom God has given children, would duly consider the responsibility incurred by them, lest, by training up their offspring in the forgetfulness and contempt of God, they become the instruments of Satan, for the eternal ruin of their souls.

Little Nelly most delighted to talk about the love of Jesus Christ in dying for poor sinners. A boy, three or four years younger, and, like herself, an inmate of the poor-house, used kindly to read some hymns to her by her bedside. Many of these she thus committed to memory, and would take delight in repeating. Among these hymns was that beautiful one beginning, "Jesus! lover of my soul." About three weeks before her death, she was overheard by the mistress of the poor-house endeavouring to sing one of her favourite hymns. After repeated attempts, she felt herself unable, from extreme weakness, to go through with it. At last she exclaimed, as if grieved at her want of power to lift her voice in praise, "I cannot sing; but you know, my dear Saviour, I can pray." She then, fancying herself alone, (as indeed she was, for the mistress was in the room adjoining,) proceeded to express, as well as she was able, her thankfulness for the comforts she enjoyed in her present condition, contrasting them with the painful deprivations of her early childhood. She declared also her humble confidence in the Saviour of sinners, and her joyful hope of acceptance through his redeeming blood.

Her whole thoughts, for some time previous to her death, seemed to be absorbed by this delightful subject. It pervaded her whole conversation, and she would take occasion, from the most trifling circumstances, to direct the attention of those who conversed with her to the love of Christ, and the way of acceptance through him. To an aged inmate of the poor-house, who was much attached to her, she would frequently say, as she entered her chamber, "That door, you see, is the door of this room, but whenever you enter think with yourself that Jesus Christ is the door to heaven." She taught this poor woman, who, like herself, was almost blind, some of the hymns from which she herself had derived much comfort, and would never be satisfied till she had heard her

perform her devotions, observing, at the same time, that it was useless to pray to God with the lips only, for that he demanded the service of the heart. "Remember," she would say to those who attended her, "that you always pray, and not with your lips only, but think in your heart what a sinner you are, and what a holy God you are addressing."

The time was now approaching when she was to sing the praises of Him whom her soul loved, in company with the multitude of those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. She became too weak to pray as usual, and lamented it to her mistress, begging her to pray for her. She was anxious for the prayers of her minister, and this, not only in private, but in the public congregation; not, however, from any wish or expectation of her recovery, but from a sense of the spiritual benefit it might please God to afford her from the sincere and persevering prayers of his believing people. The day but one before she died she was visited, for the last time, by the writer. She was in much bodily pain, yet not a murmur escaped her lips. Though too weak to converse, except in short and broken sentences, she desired prayer to be offered up to God for her; and when her request had been complied with, concluded by saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner, for Christ's sake." These were the last words the writer heard her utter, and He who inspired the prayer has doubtless, of his infinite love, condescended to answer it. She died, aged fourteen years, on the 26th of August, 1830.

Little Nelly was poor, and ignorant, and uninstructed as to all human learning, yet she obtained, through Divine teaching, the knowledge of herself as a sinner, and of Christ the Saviour of sinners. Jesus Christ said, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!" How earnestly, then, should we pray for this promised blessing! Little Nelly was a poor and friendless outcast; yet "she glorified the Lord in the fires;" and the thought of her Redeemer's sufferings made her own trials appear as nothing.

Let us learn that nothing but faith in Christ can save and support the soul, and that he is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him.

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THE

CHOLERA MORBUS.

SOME PARTICULARS RESPECTING THIS DREADFUL DISEASE EXTRACTED CHIEFLY FROM LETTERS WRITTEN BY

THE REV. WILLIAM GLEN,

OF ASTRACHAN.

IN the beginning of August 1830 it was reported that the cholera morbus had made its appearance in the suburbs. Immediately the authorities met and held a consultation as to the best means to prevent its entrance into the city, or if it came, what should be done to stop its ravages.

Papers were printed and circulated among the inhabitants informing them of the names and residence of all the physicians, showing them, at the same time, what precautions ought to be used and what might be considered symptoms of the disease. If any poor people were attacked with it, who had not servants to send for a doctor, they were requested to inform the watchmen, who stand night and day at the watchhouses, and who had received orders to report such cases instantly to the medical attendants. Indeed every thing was done that promptitude, vigilance, energy, and medical skill could perform, but, alas! it was unavailing —the disease soon entered the city, and it came upon us like a mountain torrent, bearing all before it.

The shock which it gave the inhabitants was dreadful. About the sixth day of the disease it entered the mission house. I was transcribing a letter, when my wife came into my study, and informed me that Mr. Becker, our

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excellent young German friend, was attacked. He had been with me just before, conversing about a sermon of Dr. Stennet's which had afforded him peculiar delight, and he took the book with him to translate the sermon into the German language, hoping that other poor sinners might derive as much advantage from it as he had done. But ah! in a moment he was laid on a bed of suffering, and all his labours were ended. I went down stairs to see him, and found him convulsed, in a most alarming manner. His groans and screams pierced my heart, but his agonies were quickly over. In a few hours after he expired! Dear young man! he was much beloved by us for his zealous endeavours to do good, having exerted himself most laudably for the spiritual benefit of the German population, who have been for years destitute of a pastor, and are left as sheep without a shepherd. But he is gone! His tongue is now silent in the grave, and his pen is laid down for ever.

The next person who was seized in our house was good Mrs. Lovets, another of our German friends. She was the wife of the Sarepta commissioner. The disease rapidly preyed upon her frame, and she sunk into the arms of death. After her funeral, her bereaved husband hastened away with his three motherless children, in hope of escaping the contagion; but he carried death with him, and three stages from Astrachan he died, and was buried by the road-side; for such was the fear and horror of the villagers near him, that they would not permit him to come near them while he lived, nor to be buried near them when he died.

Next, my beloved wife was attacked. Our family physician was at this time also affected with the cholera, but he prescribed for Mrs. Glen, who, after lingering in awful suspense for some time on the brink of eternity, was mercifully restored. Oh! I cannot tell you how it comforted me, while I stood watching by her bed-side, to hear her confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. She trusted simply in the Redeemer, looking for redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. And, ah! where should the sinner look but to Jesus? If God has so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life—it is

sufficient. Here let me rest, with the sweet assurance that the man who believes in him shall be saved.

Having stated what particularly referred to my own family, I will now give you a more extensive view of it.

In general, business of every kind was at a stand. The bank suspended its operations. In the bazaar not a whisper was heard. Even the kabaks, those scenes of iniquity, those moral pests, were abandoned; and a general gloom spread over the countenances of the few solitary individuals who were to be seen walking through the streets. This gloom was heightened by their attitude, moving pensively about with handkerchiefs at their noses, perfumed with, or containing camphor, so as to counteract the infection, with which it was supposed, by medical gentlemen, that the open air was in a measure saturated.

According to the best accounts, when the disease was at its height, the number of funerals, on one particular day, was five hundred, and on another, four hundred and eighty. More than a thousand were buried, about this time, in a large sand-pit for want of graves, which could not be dug so fast as required, nor at the rate that the poor could afford, twenty-five rubles being demanded for each. Such a time was never before seen in Astrachan.

On the roads leading to the burial ground, which are out of the city, scarcely any thing was to be seen from morning to night but funeral processions.

During its progress, more than sixty officers—from the governor, the admiral of the fleet, the rector of the university, and downwards—fell victims to it, and the number of the dead of all descriptions in the city alone (the resident population being not more than forty thousand) is calculated at six thousand, beside a thousand, or, as some say, two thousand of those from the interior of Russia, who were passing the summer here, and who fled to the towns and villages up the Volga, in hopes of escaping it. Of these forty were found on the road-side unburied on the first three stages, until notice was given of the circumstance to the commanding officer of the district; but the greater part of the fugitives who fell victims to the disease met their fate on the Volga. Nearly ten thousand left the city, it is said, in great confusion, and, being ill provided with food and other necessaries, were reduced to indescribable hardships on their passage up the river as the Calmucks on its banks

would have no intercourse with them. It is said that in one or more of these boats the people all perished from the cholera, and having none left to man them, they were at last carried down the stream, with the remains of the dead on board. In other cases the ravages on board these boats were dreadful.

With such scenes before their eyes, or reported on credible authority, it was impossible for the most thoughtless to be altogether unconcerned at the time, yet, alas! it is lamentable to see that, now the danger here is considered as past, many are returning to their old vicious practices, like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

From the above it appears that about a sixth or seventh of our whole population have been cut off. It is supposed that half the adults have been affected by it. Some children have died, but comparatively few.

Through the tender mercies of our God, I have been preserved without the least injury, and have been enabled to attend to the sick in the house, and also to render some assistance to our neighbours. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Dear friends, what think you of this awful visitation? O if ever there was a solemn providence which called on sinners to prepare to meet their God, it is this; yes, it calls aloud to every one of us. Perhaps the cholera morbus may never visit the place where you dwell: but it may; who can say that it shall not? When it was raging in India a few years ago, no one thought it would destroy a sixth part of the population of Astrachan. O think of the awful consequences of being hurried into the presence of your Judge, unprepared, and at a moment's warning. Is it not of infinite importance to be prepared! Reader! say not that your present occupations are so important as not to allow you to attend to these things. What are you doing? Surely your engagements are not more important than the affairs of a governor of a province, or the commander of a fleet, or the rector of a university; but the gentlemen who filled these high official situations at Astrachan, were suddenly removed by the resistless hand of death! Come, then, I beseech you, and consider your ways. Be assured there is nothing on earth so important to you, and to me, as to be prepared for heaven. That

when we are absent from the body we may be present with the Lord.

Hence it becomes a matter of universal concern to know wherein this preparation consists. A mistake here may prove fatal. Examine it well. Every man is a sinner, and, as such, is in a state of condemnation. How then can he be pardoned? How can he be justified in the sight of a just and holy God? The bible must decide. This blessed book declares that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified; therefore, it is a fruitless effort to seek justification by our own doings. No man can redeem his own soul, or give to God a ransom for his brother, therefore it is in vain to seek help from man. What then are we to do? Why, in the great work of a sinner's salvation, we must look away from all creatures, for they cannot procure for us the pardon of one sin, no, not one. But, blessed be God, we are not left without a directory in this momentous affair. O no! for thus it is written, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life," John iii. 16.

Here then is the glorious discovery! The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ is an atonement for the sins of the world, and whosoever believes in him becomes a partaker of his great salvation: his sins are blotted out: his person is justified; and being justified he is safe: he has peace with God: he has joy in the Holy Ghost: he has a title to heaven. Oh, what a happy state! Having thus committed his precious soul to the keeping of the matchless Saviour, he delights to meditate on him, seeks daily communion with him, strives continually to honour him by a holy and useful life and looks forward with joy to the day when he shall join that great multitude which no man can number, in singing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory, and honour, and blessing; for he has redeemed us to God by his blood, and we shall reign with him for ever." It was this precious faith in Jesus which supported Mrs. Glen in the prospect of eternity, and this same precious faith will support you in life and in death, and prepare you for a glorious immortality. Halleluiah! halleluiah!

Young people! you are now in the prime of life. What an affecting lesson does the case of good Mr. Becker teach you! He also was young, but he feared the Lord and was

engaged in the delightful work of attempting to do good to others. This was his happiness. This was his joy. What a sweet preparation for a better world! Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. But, ah! how few young people are acting so wisely! Dear young friends, my heart yearns over you. The summons may come as suddenly for you as it came to him. Are you ready? Have you given your heart to God? Are you trusting in the merits of Christ? Are you walking in the narrow path which leads to glory? Oh! if you are acting thus, then happy are ye. Go forward. May your life be long spared to honour your Redeemer; yet, if while thus engaged, if any of you be cut off in the days of your youth, nothing will afford your surviving parents so much pleasure as the thought that you were prepared for glory! Oh! do not neglect this great salvation.

Husbands and wives.—You can judge better than others what must have been the feelings of Mr. and Mrs. Glen, while she was struggling with this alarming disease, and her affectionate partner stood weeping by what he feared would be her dying bed! Oh, what can give comfort under such circumstances? What can bind up the breaking heart? What can dry up the falling tear? Only one thing, and that is what the Saviour denominates the "One thing needful." Yes, it was her hope in Christ; her simple reliance on Christ alone! And would not you like to see your partners in this happy frame when they are passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death?

Remember that the time will come when you must part. The cold hand of death will separate the dearest friends, and what will console you then, but a good hope through grace that your beloved partners are prepared for the mansions of bliss. And have you any scriptural ground to hope that it will be so? Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith. Prove yourselves by the unerring standard of God's holy word: and give no sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids, until you have obtained peace and satisfaction on this great and important subject.

Ye zealous and devoted servants of the Lord.—Let this awful visitation of Providence quicken you in your labours of love. If any thing can give Mr. Glen pain now he sees his wife restored and his children smiling around him, it is the thought that many are gone beyond the reach of his

voice whom he never warned to flee from the wrath to come! Now, now, is the time to work. Soon, very soon, all our opportunities will be over. Our tongues will be silent in death, and our bodies lodged in the house appointed for all living. Therefore whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.

Before I conclude, I cannot help noticing the dreadful obduracy of the human heart. Mr. Glen says, "Now the danger here is considered as past, many are returning to their old vicious practices, like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Is not this dreadful? Reader, see what man is when left to himself. O cry day and night unto God to give you a new heart, and a right spirit, to hold up your going, and preserve you from evil, to guide you by his Spirit, and lead you in the way everlasting.

Most affectionately I entreat you to give up yourself to the life-giving Saviour, then you will be prepared for every event. Amen. R. K.

St. Petersburg, 8th September, 1830.

Oft in vain the voice of truth
Solemnly and loudly warns;
Thoughtless, unexperienc'd youth,
Though it hears, the warning scorns;
Youth in fancy's glass surveys
Life prolong'd to distant years,
While the vast imagin'd space
Fill'd with sweets and joys appears.

Awful disappointments soon
Overcloud the prospect gay;
Some their sun goes down at noon,
Torn by death's strong hand away;
Where are then their pleasing schemes?
Where the joys they hop'd to find?
Gone for ever, like their dreams,
Leaving not a trace behind.

Others, who are spar'd awhile,
Live to weep o'er fancy's cheat;
Find distress, and pain, and toil,
Bitter things instead of sweet;
Sin has spread a curse around,
Poison'd all things here below
On this base polluted ground
Peace and joy can never grow.

Grace alone can cure our ills,
Sweeten life with all its cares;
Regulate our stubborn wills,
Save us from surrounding snares
Though you oft have heard in vain,
Former years in folly spent,
Grace invites you yet again,
Once more calls you to repent

Call'd again, at length beware,
Hear the Saviour's voice and live
Lest he in his wrath should swear,
He no more will warning give:
Pray that you may hear and feel,
Ere the day of grace be past!
Lest your hearts grow hard as steel,
Or this year should prove your last.

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THE

BLIND SANDWICH ISLANDER.

THE influence of the gospel, in changing the minds, and raising the characters of the most ignorant and debased of the human race, has of late been strikingly proved in the islands of the Southern ocean. Mr. Ellis and Mr. Stewart have given most interesting accounts of many chiefs and princes, led by the light of divine truth to renounce their idols, to forsake their shameful vices and cruel practices, and to give themselves to the service of the eternal Jehovah, and obedience to his holy will. But the religion of Christ descends to the meanest, and shows its power in the hovel as fully as in the palace. It makes the poor man rich, the base honourable, the deformed lovely, the feeble strong, the foolish wise, the miserable happy. One instance, from Mr. Stewart's Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands, will well illustrate what is here said.

"There is," says he, "perhaps no one in the nation, who has given more constant and decisive proofs of a saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, than Puaiti, a poor blind man. No one has manifested more child-like simplicity and meekness of heart, no one has appeared more uniformly humble, devout, pure, and upright. These mild virtues, and gentle graces, must have shone with greater lustre, in contrast with the fierce, ungoverned passions and the gross, brutal manners of the surrounding pagans."

Mr. Stewart, continuing his narrative, says, "As a singer, he formerly occupied in the retinue of a high chief, the place of the blind bard, 'in the baronial hall.'" What revels and excesses he there joined in, we are not told;

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but it may be presumed, he was as much enslaved by fleshly lusts, and carried to as great lengths of wild levity and frantic extravagance, as the rest of his companions.

When the missionaries arrived, and began to preach in the language of the country, he requested to be led to the chapel; and ever after, with the return of the sabbath, he groped his way to the house of God. He soon became deeply interested in the glad tidings, which proclaimed sight to the blind: he gave up his situation as musician, and by the most unwearied inquiry and attention, quickly made himself so familiarly acquainted with the outline of christian belief and practice, as to become a teacher to others. Only a few weeks before the ship Thames reached the Islands, Keoua, governor of Lahaina, then on a visit to Oahee, appointed him his private chaplain, and brought him to Maui with him, in that capacity. He was the first to welcome us on our unexpected arrival here, as we stepped upon the beach; and testified his joy by the most cordial shaking of our hands, and bursting afresh every few minutes into the exclamation, Aroha roa no! aroha ino roa! Great indeed, very great is my love! In civilized or savage lands, self-denial, humility, and brotherly love, are the fruits of true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Puaiti gave clear evidences of genuine piety. He left the high chief, whom he had been wont to follow and entertain, to devote himself to the Prince of peace. He ceased to sing festive songs amidst scenes of intoxication and folly, to make melody in his heart to the Lord. The people of God became his chosen companions, his best friends. He was sincerely and ardently attached to them. How truly did the Saviour affirm, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii. 35.

"Puaiti," says Mr. Stewart, "is always at the house of God, and there ever at the preacher's feet. If he happens to be approaching our habitations at the time of family worship, which has been very frequently the case, the first note of praise, or word of prayer which meets his ear, produces an immediate and most observable change in his whole aspect. An expression of deep devotion, at once overspreads his sightless countenance, while he hastens to prostrate himself in some corner, in an attitude of reverence. Indeed, so peculiar has the expression of his countenance sometimes been, both in public and domestic worship—

especia ly when he has been joining in a hymn, in his own language to the praise of the only true God and Saviour—an expression so indicative of peace and elevated enjoyment, that tears have freely started in our eyes, at the persuasion, that ignorant and degraded as he once had been, he was then offering the sacrifice of a contrite heart, and was experiencing a rich foretaste of that joy, which in the world to come shall terminate in 'pleasures for evermore.' He is poor and despised, in his person small almost to deformity, and in his countenance, from the loss of his sight, far from prepossessing; still in our judgment, he bears on him the image and superscription of Christ. If so, how striking an example of the apostle's declaration: 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are; that no flesh should glory in his presence.'" 1 Cor. i. 27—29.

The case of Puaiti is instructive, as well as interesting. Before the missionaries arrived, both his body and his soul were shut up in dreadful darkness. He might hear others say, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun;" Eccles. xi. 7. but from all this he was excluded. The green earth, and the blue sky, and the various charms which shine and glow in the visible face of nature, were to him only a dull blank. But the thick cloud, which covered his mind, was happily dispersed. He did not, like blind Bartimeus, receive bodily sight, but the eyes of his understanding were opened to discern the evil of sin, the fulness and freeness of pardoning mercy, and the way of acceptance and eternal life through Christ. A new world of wonders was now disclosed, and presented to his view. And who can speak the pure and powerful emotions which thrilled through his heart? With what delight did he listen to the glad tidings of salvation! With what eager and unabated diligence did he study the doctrines and promises of christianity! He loved and relished the divine word, as heavenly manna, the precious food of the soul; and he loved and honoured those ministers of Christ who brought it to his native land. And that which he had tasted he generously wished others to partake; that which he had learned, he laboured to teach and recommend His temper

and conduct too have been strictly consistent with the christian profession he makes.

You who read this tract, examine yourself, whether you have experienced any change of heart like Puaiti. Have you given up every company, pursuit, and pleasure, which stood as a bar to keep you from Christ? Would you willingly grope your way to the house of God, for the benefit of spiritual instruction and religious worship? or do you rather offer false pleas and pretences to excuse your neglect of it? Are you softened to penitence by looking unto Jesus whom you have pierced with your sins, and are you clothed with his humility? or are you hardened in sin and full of pride and self-righteousness? Consider your ways. Be anxious to know your real character and state in the sight of God. And O that you may be led like the poor Sandwich Islander, of whom you have been reading, to Jesus for pardon, and peace, and light, and joy.

Archbishop Leighton remarks :—"The soul of the impenitent sinner is in darkness, and loves to be so. He shuts all the passages of light as enemies to his rest, and so makes an artificial night to himself within. The soul having no light of herself, must receive light, and then show it; first be enlightened, and then shine. She is enlightened by Christ the Sun of righteousness. Every christian soul is personally engaged, first to be enlightened, and then to shine. Neither grandeur exempts from the duty, nor meanness excludes from the privilege of shining. Men of low condition in this world need not despair of it, for it is a spiritual act, and great men need not despise it, for it is a noble act to shine by Christ's light. 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,'" Isa. lx. 1.

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THE DANGER

OF

TRIFLING WITH CONVICTIONS:

AS ILLUSTRATED IN

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A YEOMAN.

B. H——was the son of a pious father, to whom the preaching of the late Mr. ——— had been made useful, and who afterwards made a bold, steady, and zealous confession of Christ before men, and died in the faith, leaving his son, the subject of this narrative, then quite a child, to the care of an affectionate and anxious mother. He was trained up to a stated attendance on the house of God, under the ministry of one of the most faithful and impressive preachers of the last century.

When about fourteen or fifteen years of age, he was the subject of very strong convictions of the evil of sin, and of the necessity of obtaining an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. His heart was then tender, and his conscience awake: but, alas! this serious concern was of short continuance. The flame of sacred feeling was smothered in its birth, by the influence of worldly company, by undue attention to the business of the world, and by the evil example of some who were called christians. The circumstance which had the most injurious influence on his youthful mind, was the conduct of a professor of religion, who, as he thought, had acted an unjust and oppressive part towards his widowed mother, whose business B. H., at a very early age, conducted with very great industry and success.

The Lord Jesus hath said, "Woe to the world because of offences," or stumbling-blocks; and "woe to him, by whom the offence cometh!" The conduct of the individual alluded to, who attended the same place of worship, and made a considerable figure there, gave B. H. a distaste for religion, excited prejudice in his mind, and exposed him

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to the fatal temptation of the enemy of souls, that "all men are liars," and that religion is a mere delusion.

O ye false professors of religion, ye hypocrites in Zion, whose pride, deceitfulness, covetousness, and fraud disgrace the christian name, be warned! be warned! May the Lord give you timely repentance!

B. H. was thrust into public life at an early age. Being very tall and manly for his years, when about sixteen, he was invited to join a company of his neighbours, who, during the most alarming crisis of the last war, came forward to arm themselves in defence of their beloved country. He was thus drawn into society which was far from favourable to the growth of piety, and was introduced to many scenes of feasting, which led him to break the bounds of christian temperance and sobriety.

It was nearly twenty years before his death that the writer first entered into conversation with him on religious subjects. From early youth, an acquaintance had subsisted, but about the time alluded to, the truth, in all its glory and sweetness, had shone into the mind of the writer, after a long season of great and perilous temptation to infidelity. He was grieved to find that the views entertained by B. H. were very similar to those he had once entertained, and that, in the pride of his heart, he had adopted the same wretched principles which the writer had himself cherished too long. B. H. endeavoured to cast all the blame of his unbelief and irreligion on God. Never will the writer forget the manner in which he said, "If I am to be saved, I shall be saved; but if I am to be lost, I shall be lost, and what can I do?" He did not use this language in a spirit of proud indignation, or in contempt of the authority of God; but with apparent bitterness of soul, as expressive of the grievous entanglement with which Satan had surrounded him and of the despair which overwhelmed his mind. His friend appealed to his common sense, and to that common prudence, which he would exercise in regard to his temporal affairs, to the following effect: "You will not act on the same principle in regard to the interests of the present world. You will not say, If I am to have a crop next harvest, I shall have a crop, and if I am not to have one I shall not have one, and therefore it is of no use to plough and sow. No, my dear friend, you know full well that God has wisely and kindly connected the means and the end

and that, although your ploughing and sowing do not ensure a crop, still, without these means being used, you would be accounted a madman to expect one. Use the same kind of wisdom in spiritual things which directs you in temporal concerns, and then you will find that there is a gracious connexion between sowing to the Spirit, and reaping life everlasting. The same sentiment which now distracts your mind, haunted my mind for many months; so as almost to lead me to restrain prayer before God, and to give up all thoughts of being religious; but in the course of my reading, I met with this passage of Scripture, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do according to his good pleasure.' I read also this short comment on the passage; 'We must work, as though all depended on our working; we must trust, as feeling that God must do all in us and for us.' This, by the mercy of God, broke the snare of Satan; I began with renewed earnestness to call upon God, to read the Scriptures, to implore the Holy Spirit, to pray over the sermons I heard, as well as before I went to the house of God; and I have to bless God that, in infinite mercy and condescension, he met with me, he opened my eyes, turned the current of my affections, gave me a new and heavenly bias, and favoured me with an inward testimony to the truth of the promise, 'Then shall ye find me, when ye search for me with all your heart'—'Seek, and ye shall find, &c.'"

B. H. listened with fixed attention, acknowledged the force of the statements, and parted from me with expressions of regret. Our course lay in opposite directions, and often did I look back towards him with a full heart and eye, while I earnestly besought the Father of lights to shine in upon his mind. On several occasions afterwards the subject was renewed.

Our pursuits were for many years so different, and the society we loved so opposed, that we seldom met, except for a few minutes at a time. Often when I had not the opportunity of speaking to him, I have given him a look, which, while it was intended to express the tender pity I felt towards him, he afterwards, when in affliction, told me went to his heart. He entirely forsook the place of worship to which his excellent father had been so strongly attached, and sought in the company of the gay and thoughtless, to stupify a conscience, which had been too early and too deeply

imbued with the truth of God to be easily silenced. Seldom did I entirely lose sight of him, and often did I pour out my soul to God for him in secret, while I witnessed his departure from the Guide of his youth.

He was prosperous in his business, and, in consequence of the native agreeableness of his manners, and his courage in horsemanship, he was much courted by gentleman, far his superiors in property and rank. His temper was amiable and yielding, and this proved a snare to him, as he sacrificed conviction to an unwillingness to disoblige his worldly associates.

Nearly twenty years passed away in a busy round of pursuits connected with the farm, the turf, and the sports of the field. Time, which tarries not for man, and all the opportunities of time, as to the soul's vast interests, lost, for ever lost, while days, and months, and years were squandered without remorse.

Among the circumstances which affected his character, and introduced untold distress into his mind, was an acquaintance he formed with a vicious female, which proved the most fatal to his peace, and injurious to his reputation; forgetting that the Scripture declares "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" By this female, he was perfectly infatuated. She had the means of living in a style far above his own, and her liberality towards him was unbounded. Thus situated, he was shut out from reproof, and became the companion of the votaries of dissipation.

While he was thus casting off fear, and drinking in iniquity with greediness, a sad and appalling circumstance transpired, which compelled a friend to address him by letter, with the hope and prayer that he might attend to the reproof and counsel of friendship. A company of young men had been feasting together and playing at cards till past midnight; they had drunk freely, and, it is to be feared, blasphemed the God of heaven. One of the party the next morning, was found drowned in a deep ditch, under such circumstances as left no doubt that he had cast himself into the water. Poor young man! he was an infidel in sentiment, and abandoned in practice. The event produced a strong sensation in the neighbourhood, and never will those who witnessed it forget the deep convulsive sob with which his aged father, on stepping into the coach to follow

his remains to the tomb, cried out, "Oh my poor boy! my poor boy!"

As B. H. had been one of this party, his friend could not forbear writing to him the next day as follows:

"My dear friend,—Perhaps the sacred hours of the sabbath may afford you time for the serious consideration of a few thoughts, dictated by a deep-felt concern for the well-being of your immortal soul. The sad exit of one of your companions has produced those feelings in my mind which I would not suppress, and which I will not conceal *from you.*

"Alas! alas! tears of blood would be shed in vain *for him.* His state is fixed for ever,—for ever; and what that state is, let your *own fears and suspicions declare.* All hope of arresting his downward progress, of calling him to repentance, of snatching him as 'a brand from the burning,'—is gone: and while every christian bosom heaves the deepest sigh, and weeps in silence over a fellow-creature in ruins, all—all cannot avail to benefit one, whose day of grace is gone. But may we not look at the living, and endeavour to lead them 'to consider their latter end?" Ah! B. H. you little imagine how often you occupy my thoughts, and what pain and grief I feel on your behalf. I know not why it should be; one soul is not more valuable than another: still your soul lies upon my heart, more than almost any other. Sometimes from this I entertain a hope, that, at length, after all your departures from God, after all your sins, aggravated, as those sins are, by all the early instructions of your childhood, you will be called from the way of madness and folly to the wisdom of the just. Methinks your dying father, when his infant son was brought to his dying bed, and clasped in his feeble arms, poured forth his last desires and prayers on his behalf, and committed him into the hands of the compassionate Saviour. But oh! could he have read his future history for forty years, what anguish; oh! what anguish would have wrung his heart. To see that son, the companion of the thoughtless and dissipated, joining in the song of the drunkard, casting off reproof, and putting the fear of God behind his back: to see him turning his back on the house of God, and on the minister he loved as his own soul; to see him adding sin to sin. Oh! what would he have felt? what would he have said? There is a text, 'The companion of fools shall be destroyed;' and another, 'The wages of sin is death;' and another, 'The way of trans-

gressors is hard ;' and another, ' The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all that forget God.' These, doubtless, are familiar to your ears ; but alas ! do they make even a *slight* impression on your heart? Consider, how short-lived are sensual pleasures. Consider, how soon the day of mirth may be exchanged for bitter and eternal woe.

" Poor ——— ! you think of him, and you feel a horrid assurance that he is in remediless misery. It is not uncharitable so to feel, because it does him no injury, and it may produce salutary impressions on your own soul. But should *you* perish in your sins, there are circumstances which may render your torments a thousand fold more exquisite. *He* had no pious friends to lead him to hear the gospel in his youth ; he had no early education in the things of God ; perhaps he had no Bible truths in his memory, as checks against temptation ; but *you* will have to review all the scenes and opportunities in which truth was set before you, and the voice of mercy called you, and conscience seconded the counsels of friends and the faithful warnings of ministers ; but all—all in vain. Oh ! to be shut up in hell, with much of the bible in the memory ! Oh ! to be in black despair, with all the gracious invitations of the gospel rushing through the thoughts, and racking the distracted spirit ! this is hell. Oh ! to be separated from nearest, dearest friends, and that for ever ! To be an eternal witness to the wailing and gnashing of the teeth, and to be a participator of the misery of the damned ; to mourn eternally lost opportunity and a lost soul ! Is not this a bitter cup? and yet you are madly holding it in your hands—RESOLVED to drink it :—*are you* ?—I hope not. B. H. are you happy? Does sin make you happy ? Is conscience quite asleep? God forbid ! Of some God hath said, ' They are given to idols, let them alone.' I trust, he has not yet said so respecting you, and that this short and hurried letter may appear a proof of it. Shall I leave you without a word of counsel? Blessed be God, you are yet alive, and perhaps disposed to say, in the language of the poet,

> ' Tell it unto sinners, tell
> I am, I am out of hell.'

" I would address you as Daniel addressed Nebuchadnezzar ' Wherefore let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness ' Or, in the language of Elihu,

Job xxxvi. 18, 'Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with a stroke, then a great ransom shall not deliver thee.' The latter passage has been deeply engraven on my heart since I heard the affecting end of him who so lately lost his money, and sang and drank in your company: time, however, forbids me to state how full of awful meaning it appears to me. Weigh it seriously. It is not too late—no—*you may* yet find mercy; you *must*, if you seek it. Why, oh why will you die? What will the eternal society of wicked companions do for you? Companions in sin, who became companions in misery, will be mutual tormentors; a conviction of this led the rich man to say 'Send Lazarus to my brethren, lest they also come into this place of torment.' This may, perhaps, be the last friendly warning God may see fit to afford you. Let me, then, from love to your soul and regard to your person, entreat you to 'consider your ways,' 'to turn to God, to forsake the foolish and live.' He that repenteth and forsaketh his sin, shall find mercy; *but in this world only*. Soon life will be gone: soon eternity will break in upon you. Oh! that you may not then cry out, with horror and amazement, 'The great day of his wrath, *is come*.' Ah! then

> 'Hills will be deaf, and mountains will not hear;
> There are no caves, nor caverns there,
> To shield your hearts from fear,
> To shade your souls from fire.'

"With earnest concern for your best interests,
I am your sincere friend."

I grieve to say, that this letter was the occasion of many expressions of anger and disdain towards the writer, who, however, committed it to God, conscious that a sincere regard to his friend had dictated it.

The wicked goeth on in his wickedness, and, "through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." The Lord, however, has messengers to send, by whom he will obtain a hearing; and if he speak once, yea twice, and man regardeth it not, still he can give such a knock at the door of the heart, as shall demand and secure attention.

Poor B. H.! never shall I forget the strong excitement produced on my mind, about two years after the above letter was written, when told, on a sabbath morning, that he was

taken dangerously ill, at the house of the female referred to, and that he was in great distress of mind. In the afternoon I was informed, that the female had left home for London; and as it grew dark, I went to the house and inquired for him. To my surprise the door was opened by the mistress of the house. I inquired, "How is B. H ?" "He is very, very ill." "Can I see him?" "Yes," was the answer, "he will be glad to see *you*." She conducted me to the door of his chamber. I was soon at the side of his couch. He was exceedingly restless,—rolling backwards and forwards in great agony of mind. As soon as he recognised me, he burst into tears, and said, "What! are you come to see me? I did not think you would have come to see me *here*." I replied, "My dear friend, I heard you were in great distress of mind,—that was enough, I could not stay away." "I am, indeed I am," he rejoined, "I have been so great a sinner, I fear there is no hope."—Then, with a vehement, yet sepulchral voice, accompanied with a penetrating, dreadful look, he exclaimed, "Eternity's a long word, we cannot fathom it.—O eternity! eternity!" He stated the difficulties he felt, arising from the long course of sin in which he had indulged, and the force he had offered to his own conscience. "I knew better," he said, "I have sinned against light and knowledge. I have been miserable all the while, and yet I sinned on." I endeavoured to meet his case by suitable portions of Scripture. I said, "It is not my business, nor my purpose to make light of your sin, or to lead you to think lightly of it. The malady is indeed dreadful, and you cannot see your sin in colours half so odious as He seeth them who is 'the Holy One of Israel;' but despair not; the gospel supposes that the sin of man is great, inconceivably great; and all the provisions of the gospel are adapted to meet the most desperate malady of a guilty mind. I would not treat you deceitfully, nor deceive you with flattering words, but I would make known to you, that all manner of sin is pardonable to a repenting and believing sinner; that, the blood of Jesus Christ can atone for the vilest transgressions, that, 'it is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,' the chief of sinners; that 'he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.' Think how wonderful a person Jesus is—God in my nature, offering up himself a sacrifice for sin, and perfectly obeying the law which I had

broken, to bring in a righteousness to justify me; can you set bounds to the perfection of *his* obedience,—to the efficacy of his atonement?" "No," he replied, "I cannot doubt the ability of the Lord Jesus to save, but," (with tears,) he added, "I fear he *will not* save *me;* I have neglected him, trifled with him, and despised his great salvation." "And why should you doubt his willingness to save *you?* he has not made an exception. He came into the world to seek and to save that which *was lost.* Did he not come willingly? He had no business to transact here but the salvation of souls. Could he have been willing to come and to die, and not be willing to save? Has he not manifested himself to be as willing to save as he is able? Whom did he ever cast out that came to him? Did he not save a Magdalen, a Peter, a Saul of Tarsus, a dying thief? The language of the publican meets your case and your frame of mind—'God be merciful to me a sinner.' If you are willing to be saved, doubt not his willingness to save you. If you never came to him before, come *now.* He says to *you,* 'Come *now,* let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'"

I then asked him if he would like to see Mr. ——, the minister to whom his father had been so much attached. "Do you think he would come to see me *here?*" he said. "Yes, doubtless, if you wish it; he loved your father, and he loves you for your father's sake." His mind was too strongly excited, and his body too weak, to render a lengthened visit prudent; therefore, after having committed him to the grace and compassion of God in prayer, I left him.

It was a solemn season to my own soul, never, never, to be forgotten. His mind became calmer. He afterwards had several interviews with Mr. ——. The Lord was pleased to raise him from the bed of sickness, and to restore him to health.

For some months he appeared to promise hopefully, and indeed he never ran into those excesses to which he had been formerly addicted; still he did not break away from those dangerous associations he had formed. He frequently called on me, and often would the tear start from his eye when I spoke to him affectionately and seriously. He had a strong conflict between duty and affection. His affectionate and yielding disposition was too prone to sacrifice his peace and his conscience to gratify the worldlings who

besieged him with their entreaties and attentions. When it was too evident that his heart was disposed to turn back again to the world, I have said to him, "I hope you do not forget that 'long word, ETERNITY;' it is nearer *now* than it was *then*."

He was declining visibly to himself for some months previously to his last illness, but he endeavoured to conceal the fact from others. A short time before he was laid aside he was enticed into a hunting excursion, which was followed by some excesses, the recollection of which preyed deeply on his spirits.

My last interview with him was short; the subject of my conversation was the happy condition of a true christian, because such a man, amidst all the pressure of earthly care, might solace himself with the consideration,—to-morrow I may be in heaven. "Ah," he said, "it is a great thing to be able to say so: I wish I could." I replied, "Life is so uncertain, and death is so near, that it behoves every man to be concerned for a meetness for heaven:—if we are not fit to die, we are not fit to live." I encouraged him to cry earnestly to God for that influence from above, by which alone he would be enabled to lay hold of Christ and eternal life in him.

My business called me to the metropolis soon after, and on the Saturday, while walking through its busy streets, my thoughts were quite absorbed in meditating on the spiritual condition of my friend at D——. That passage had forcibly struck my mind, "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." I resolved to take the earliest opportunity of pressing this truth on his conscience with seriousness and affection, that I might clear my own soul from the guilt of unfaithfulness, and, by Divine assistance, promote his welfare.

The following Monday a mutual friend inquired, "Have you heard that B. H. is very ill?" "No," I hastily rejoined; "is he dangerously ill?" "Yes," was the answer; "it is not at all likely that he will recover." The sudden intelligence was like a dagger to my heart, especially when I learned that his mind was wandering. I could not leave home till late in the evening, and the hours were like years to me, so great was my anxiety and distress on his behalf. I poured out my soul to God for him, and my spirit was overwhelmed within

me. I trembled for fear that the day of account was suddenly arrived before I could warn him. As soon as I was at liberty, I hastened to the house where he lay. The female to whom reference has been made, answered the bell, supposing the physician had arrived, as he had been sent for express. I inquired, "Can I see B. H.?" She replied, "There is no person he would be so glad to see as yourself, if he were sensible, but he is quite delirious, and I expect the physician every moment." She assured me, that the first lucid moment he had she would send for me. I left the house with a heavy heart, mourning as I went over his lamentable condition, and praying that he might recover his strength before he went hence, to be seen no more; so far at least as to receive the gospel into his heart, to manifest the power of Divine grace in his life, and to become a companion of those who fear God.

On the morrow I learned that he was worse, and that the delirium was very violent. The physician had given strict orders that nothing like religion should be introduced to him, and forbade his nearest relatives the room if they presumed to talk to him on serious topics. Alas! alas that a physician should thus act! This worldly-wise man, however well-intentioned, probably hindered the cure of his body by leaving the distracted soul to prey upon itself, without that assistance which affectionate christian friends might have afforded. He wanted medicine for the mind, the conscience, and the heart, and this being withheld, distraction, despair, derangement followed.

The next day the physician gave a favourable report of the invalid, and my hopes revived, and I trusted that prayer had been heard for him. On calling, I learnt that the improvement had been of short continuance, and that symptoms were more alarming. In the evening he died. I shall see him no more, until the judgment of the great day.

I was told, that in the paroxysms of delirium, as well as when more composed, he was continually crying out for his friend, and saying, "If he knew I was ill, he would come and pray for me," or, as he expressed it in his delirium, "he would give me a prayer." The knowledge of this fact added to my distress. I thought I could cheerfully surrender my life, if thereby his soul might be rescued from destruction.

A near relation who was with him the last sabbath he spent on earth, informed me, that before the delirium came

on, the distress of his mind was very poignant, and that he had most abasing views of himself and of his sin. He expressed his fears that he had sinned beyond the reach of Divine mercy. "I have been so great a sinner, do you think there is any hope for me?" His relative referred to that passage, "Then spake Jesus a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." This truth appeared to take hold of his mind, and during the short interval that followed, before he became delirious, he often repeated it. He is gone—he has passed that line which divides the two worlds; his character is summed up, and his state is fixed for ever!

Oh, how empty and unsatisfying is a life of carnal pleasure! The experience of B. H. bore testimony to this. When on the bed of sickness, a friend said to him, "Often when you have passed my door, on your return from hunting, I have noticed that you appeared to assume a cheerful countenance, and to force a laugh with your companions; but I have thought there was a something about you which seemed to say, I am not happy." "You were perfectly correct in your opinion," he replied; "very often while I was laughing with my gay associates, I felt inexpressibly miserable. I was a miserable wretch amidst it all; I had not a moment's peace, conscience haunted me, and the sight of you has filled me with inconceivable anguish. I wished I could break away from my companions,—that I had never known them,—that I was like you,—and sometimes that I was a dog." His friend answered, "I thought I could read as much in your countenance, but I did not expect to have heard so much from your own mouth. Then you cannot say that hounds and horses, and jovial comrades make a man happy?" "No," he said, "I cannot, I dare not; all my past experience proves the contrary."

Let every reader regard the solemn admonition, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God and he will abundantly pardon him."

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No. 829.

NARRATIVE SERIES.

THE

GREAT CHANGE.

IN the neighbourhood of a large town in England, where the gospel is clearly and faithfully preached, as a minister was walking a little distance into the country, he met a man whose dress indicated that his circumstances in life were not the most degraded. He addressed him with the common words, "It is a fine day." As the frankness of this man engaged the minister's attention, he thought he might be the means of doing him good, and accordingly, after a few general remarks, he observed, that while we were by nature sinners, and had hearts depraved by sin, how much it concerned us to know whether or not we were born again. "Born again!" exclaimed the stranger, with seeming astonishment, "what is that? How can we be born again? We cannot die, and come again into the world, can we?"

"No," replied the minister, "we cannot. But by the expression, 'born again,' it is meant that we are to have new hearts. God says, 'A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh,'" Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

"New hearts!" exclaimed the man, in a tone of great astonishment; "what! must our hearts be taken out? Why that would be to kill us. I cannot understand that language at all; pray tell me, so that I may understand your meaning."

His instructor felt amazed, and was at first at a loss how to proceed; but, looking up to God for direction,

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he called the man's attention to the character of a sinner whose heart was changed by means of the word, in the following language: "Suppose, my friend, you knew of a wicked man, who broke the Lord's day, took God's name in vain, told lies, neglected secret prayer and the reading of the Scriptures: such a man enters the house of God to hear a sermon; he listens to it with attention; the minister describes the wickedness of the human heart, lays open its deceitfulness, shows the character of the sinner, the excuses he makes for his sins, and for neglecting the concerns of his soul; he opens to his view the love of Jesus in dying for sinners, even the chief, and his ability and willingness to save them. He also warns the wicked of their danger, unfolds the condition of a sinner dying without an interest in Jesus, and beseeches him to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold by faith on the hope set before him, even Jesus, who is as willing as he is able to save. The man begins to *feel* under the sermon that his heart is indeed wicked, and that the description now given exactly answers his case; he begins to see the evil of sin, and his guilt in sinning against a God of so much love and mercy; he retires at the close of the service, bitterly bewailing his wickedness; he feels such sorrow for his sin as he never felt before; and, with tears at the thought of his former iniquities, he retires to his room to meditate upon what has passed. His sins begin to be arrayed before him, he feels the truth of what he heard, and on his knees he begins in prayer to cry to God for mercy. He now cannot feel easy under a sense of his transgressions, and the dread of being called to the bar of God to give in his account. He who used to spend his sabbaths strolling in the fields, or in some vain amusements, is seen regularly attending the house of God; he forsakes his former companions, abandons the places of sinful amusements, as the theatre, fairs, wakes, and the like; he begins to find a friend or two, who, noticing his attention under the word, talk to him; he reveals his mind, his fears, his troubles, and by their advice, and the sermons he afterwards hears, he is enabled, as a poor perishing sinner, to depend alone upon Jesus for salvation, trusting on what he did and suffered in the room and place of the guilty. He now sees his need, and the suitableness of Jesus to his case, as a Saviour, in every way able and willing to save, and he finds peace and joy in believing.

Now, my friend, here is the case of a sinner, who had a wicked heart, and had lived a wicked life. Now the change which has passed upon him is what the Scriptures call, regeneration, or being born again; his former pleasures, his former life, are now altered."

The man stood listening with great attention while the minister was giving this short description of a new heart, and said, "*Now, now* I see what you mean. I now begin to understand your description of *a new heart*."

His instructor was pleased to see him understand his meaning. He then asked him if he thought *his* heart was changed. The man said he thought it was not; for, alas! like too many, he lived without God in the world. Upon further inquiry, he confessed that he went to no place of worship, and had hitherto neglected his soul. He wished to know what he must do in order to have this change, when his instructor said, as Paul did to the inquiring jailor, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. Search the Scriptures, for the reading of God's word is one of the means by which souls are converted; and pray to God for mercy in the name of Jesus, as it is for Christ's sake we are to ask for blessings. Also attend on the Lord's day, at his house, where you will be further taught the way of salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

The man seemed grateful for this advice, and in parting earnestly begged that the minister would pray to God that his heart might be changed, and that when he died he might be taken to heaven.

Reader, may I ask you, do you think your heart is changed? Do you think that if you were now to die you should go to heaven? Remember, that without a new heart you never can enter the abodes of bliss. Before you lay this tract aside, inquire seriously into your state. Ask yourself the following questions:—Do I love Jesus? Do I love his people? Do I rest upon the merits of Jesus as my only hope? Do I use every means that God has appointed? Does the love of Jesus lead me to hate every sin, and love holiness in heart and life?—If you can answer these questions in the affirmative, it is well; but, if you are conscious this is not the case, I beseech you to fly to Jesus ere it be too late, for now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.

"If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath

committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" Ezek. xviii. 21—23.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17.

MIGHTY Redeemer, set me free
From my old state of sin;
O make my soul alive to thee,
Create new powers within.

Renew mine eyes, and form mine ears,
And mould my heart afresh;
Give me new passions, joys, and fears,
And turn the stone to flesh.

Far from the regions of the dead,
From sin, and earth, and hell,
In the new world that grace has made,
I would for ever dwell.

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THE

SABBATH STROLLER RECLAIMED.

IN a romantic vale in the north of Scotland, where the winding Tay gives beauty to the view, and where the lofty Grampian hills appear in the distance, lived a pious family. The industrious parents found difficulty to bring up a numerous offspring, but nothing grieved their hearts so much, as to see their children, as they grew up in years, careless about their souls: many prayers in the family and in the closet were put up for them, and many a tear shed for their unconcern. Among the sins the children were prone to commit, was rambling in the fields on the Lord's day, where the giddy and thoughtless met for amusement. They were not allowed to neglect the house of God, for three times every sabbath the family were seen within the sacred walls of God's temple, but when returning from worship, they often wandered idly about. Sabbath after sabbath they were admonished, but still the elder children kept lurking behind their parents, and came home only in time to prepare for going again to hear the word.

The eldest son, whom we shall call David, at last began to feel grief at his conduct, and his conscience would not allow him to walk with his companions with the same comfort as formerly: he began to see he did wrong, and a sermon he heard one sabbath evening upon John iii. 5, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," made a deep impression upon his mind. He wept in secret as he remembered the words, "Cannot see the kingdom of God." These impressions being made during winter, and when he had no temptation to his former sabbath strollings, he thought the resolutions he made were a sufficient barrier to future sabbath breaking; but the spring returned, and the banks of the lovely river were again clad with their wonted beauty; nature again in its varied hues showed forth the glory of its Creator; the woods resounded with the songs of the birds; and the pleasant walks invited

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the visits of the neighbouring cottagers. David found the temptation too strong for his self-grounded resolutions, and he again resorted on the Lord's day, after hearing the word, to his former walks; but with this difference, he walked alone; the vain conversation he used with his companions, was too glaring a sin to his half-enlightened mind, but still even alone, he was not happy; he was, by his appearance among the giddy youths who broke the sabbath around him, countenancing a practice which he was assured was contrary to the mind and will of God; but how to break off this sin he knew not.

In this state of mind he one sabbath, after sermon, took a walk in another direction, but equally the resort of the gay and giddy; he had not walked far, when he observed a woman considered to be affected in her mind, and who was the sport of the place. He walked behind her for some way; the verdant fields around were thronged with the young and old, some of whom had left places of worship to take their pleasure walks; when the poor woman began to exclaim against such conduct, and among the many things she said, the following left a lasting impression upon the mind of young David:—

"Ye parents, ye promised to bring up your children in the fear of the Lord, to give them warning of the dangers attending sin, to point out the way to heaven by Jesus Christ, and to show them a good example, and now ye come for pleasure to these fields on the Lord's day, and bring your children also; ye seem to care no more for your vows than the stones lying by the road side: how can ye escape the punishment due to such crimes? Ye will ere long be like the man who got folks to do all things for him, but could not get a man to go to hell for him—that place of woe, to which ye are going, except ye repent."

David was astonished at this unexpected discourse, and kept walking behind her, until her road led a different way; his conscience was alarmed, he trembled at the guilt he had often incurred, and with a heart full of sorrow he bent his homeward way. The beauties of the surrounding scene ceased to charm, and full of fear he arrived sooner than usual at his father's house. His pious mother inquired where he had been, and when he told her what had passed, with the resolution he made coming home never again to violate the sacred day, she, afraid this good resolution

would prove no better than those formerly made, told him she was glad to hear of what had passed, but feared the impression would soon wear off, and that he would return again to his former ways. In the course of the week, his convictions increased rather than decreased; he felt deep sorrow for the many precious hours he formerly mispent, hours of opportunity passed which never could be recalled, and the great evil of offending so good and so gracious a Saviour: the language of David, in the 51st Psalm, became his, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done evil." Conviction followed conviction, he saw not only the evil of breaking the fourth commandment, but of living in other sins and omitting other duties.

Another sabbath came, but the fields could afford no beauty to tempt him to depart from his former resolution, a resolution which, it may be hoped, was founded on a more solid foundation than any former. The Bible and pious books afforded delights on the Lord's day, when not hearing the word, far superior to any pleasures he enjoyed in the fields. When hearing the word preached, he found a happiness in it superior to what he formerly felt, and he hastened home to meditation, reading, and prayer, with greater eagerness than ever he paced his way to the lovely fields.

But he was not content to enjoy his pleasures alone. He had a sister and brother who were still as blind to his pleasures as he had been a short time before. When they had come home from their sabbath strolls, he tried to show them the evil of their ways; the love of Jesus, his commands, his threatenings, were in vain urged to convince and reform them. They smiled at his youthful zeal, and seemed to think he had grown morose and melancholy; but the flame was kindled by Him whose Spirit begins the good work and carries it on, and who imparted peace in believing in Christ, and enabled him to go on his way rejoicing. Year followed year, while he walked in wisdom's ways; his books, his companions, his joys and sorrows, were now altered, he proved the comfort of his parents in the decline of life, and while his sister and brother, by their conduct, caused them sorrow, his hearty counsel, and consistent life, commended itself to many of the careless around, and made them acknowledge hat God was with him of a truth.

Providence at last called him to leave the parental roof. With feelings of sorrow he surveyed the scenes of former

days, but he also with joy remembered the kindness of God in turning his feet into the paths of peace. When a friend expressed sorrow to think he was leaving his parents to go among strangers, he quickly replied, "If God be with me here, I am happy: if he be with me where I go, I shall be happy; it signifies little where I live, if God be with me." At last the parting hour arrived, and once more he visited the walks he often took to meditate upon Him who is fairer than the sons of men; the banks of the river, the spreading beach, the woody vale, were places where he remembered he had erected Ebenezer stones.

It may be said of him, as of Joseph; "The Lord was with him," and prospered him wherever he went. The capital of Scotland was the place he was led to. There he found friends, who, like himself, had been sabbath breakers, and despisers of God, but through grace had been turned into the narrow way; there he lived for many years, and was the means in the hands of God in turning many from the error of their way. He went as a missionary to proclaim salvation to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and at this present time he is engaged in this glorious work.

And now, reader, before you close this little tract, inquire seriously, whether you have ever seen the error of your way, and been led to trust in Jesus as your only Saviour. Have you, like the subject of this narrative, seen the evil of breaking the Lord's day? For there cannot be a greater evidence that you are still in an unconverted state, than taking your own pleasure on that day of the Lord. Remember the solemn truth mentioned in this tract, "You may get one to do all things for you, but you cannot get one to go to hell for you." If you in reality love Jesus, you cannot break his commands, for love is shown by obedience. If you are conscious you are still in nature's darkness, flee to Him for mercy who died on the cross, the just for the unjust, and who has said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Delay not,—delays are dangerous: "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Believing in Christ, you will love the day and worship of God, and your sabbaths on earth will prepare you for a never ending sabbath in heaven.

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A TRAVELLER ARRIVED AT THE END OF THE JOURNEY.

BY REV. RICHARD KNILL,
OF ST. PETERSBURGH.

MISS P. the interesting traveller whose short history I am going to relate, was a native of a rustic village in the principality of Wales. Here she spent the early part of her life, and little thought then that she should visit other climes, and die in a foreign land. But so it came to pass: she visited St. Petersburgh, and I became acquainted with her.

It was the unspeakable privilege of this young person to have a pious mother, whose godly life and scriptural instructions produced deep and tender feelings on her youthful mind. Her mother prayed for her, and with her, and regularly took her to the house of God. Happily for her the preaching she attended was of the right kind, and deepened the impressions which were made at home.

By these means her memory was well stored with hymns and portions of the Bible, and a grand outline of the way of salvation. Impressions thus made in early life are seldom entirely effaced. This I particularly noticed in the experience of my departed friend; and parents and preachers too may draw great encouragement from this thought, when they are endeavouring to lead the minds of young people to the knowledge of Christ.

The first time I ever heard of Miss P. was on the 27th of May, 1831. I received a note, saying, "Miss P., one of your congregation, is very desirous to see you; she is exceedingly ill, and hopes you will come soon." The distance was five miles, and the next morning I walked over to her residence. I found her alone. Her countenance indicated that her continuance here would not be long. I

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said to her, "A friend of yours has written me a note, requesting me to call and see you, and I am come." "Thank you," she replied; "I am glad to see you. I hope you will be able to comfort me."

She was lying on her bed neatly dressed, and a black velvet pelisse, trimmed with fur, was thrown loosely over her feet. It seemed to say, "So will the black pall soon cover me, when I am laid in my coffin."

I sat down by her bed-side, and entered into conversation, trying at the same time to recollect if I had ever seen her before. But I could not trace the faintest recollection; yet I thought I had seen the pelisse on one of my hearers at the chapel. I said to her, "Pray, miss, do you know me?" "O yes," she replied, "I know you very well, I have seen you several times; have you not seen me?" I answered, "I think I have seen this pelisse, but I have no recollection of you." The tears started in her eyes; "Yes," said she, "I wore this pelisse when I was at chapel. *It* is not altered, but *I* am greatly altered, my illness has reduced me to a shadow; but the distress of my soul outweighs all my bodily pain."

Just as she finished this sentence a lady entered the room. It was the amiable and benevolent friend to whom the house belonged, who, I was happy to perceive, was unremitting in her attentions to the dying sufferer.

This lady immediately began about the distressing state of Miss P.'s mind. "I cannot account for it, sir," said she, "nor would you be able to account for it, if you knew her character; so kind, so religious, so affectionate, so obliging is she, that every body loves her. She is an angel—I assure you it is a fact."

"I have no reason to doubt your veracity, madam," I replied, "but I do think I can account for Miss P.'s disease. She wants something more than you have mentioned in order to become happy." Then, turning to Miss P., I said, "You hear what your benevolent friend has said respecting you, and we will not attempt to disprove it for a moment. But tell me, is all this which the lady has mentioned sufficient for you to rest upon when you shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ?"

"O no," she replied.

"And suppose that, in addition to all your friend has stated, you could command all the excellences of all the

good people in the world, would all this together be a sure foundation on which you could venture the salvation of your soul?"

"No," she replied; "all this would be of no avail to me."

"Then your friend has mistaken your case. Pray how do you think a sinner can be saved?"

"Ah," said she, "there is only one way, and that is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but through faith in the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I rejoiced in this testimony from her dying lips. It gave me great encouragement to hope that her soul would not remain long in darkness; and it afforded me a fine opportunity for explaining to the lady what the scriptures say respecting the only name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

After this the lady read a chapter, and I engaged in prayer, I then pointed out several parts of the Bible which I wished to have read to Miss P. as her strength would bear it; and, after a few other observations, I took my leave.

The distance of my house, and other circumstances, would not permit me to renew my visits every day; but I soon endeavoured to make a second call. On entering the room she looked at me with an anxious countenance, and said, "Ah! I have no peace; my soul can take no comfort; my burden is heavier than I can bear. I am greatly distressed."

I spoke of the Saviour. "Yes," she replied, "it is very true; I know it all—but—my unbelief! This is my burden; I cannot take hold of the encouragement; I want to come to Christ, but cannot. Oh, this hard, this wicked heart. Pray for me, I beseech you."

"Very well," I said, "but compose your mind. Tell me a little about your history. We are strangers to each other and it is desirable that I should know something of the disease in order to apply the remedy."

She then began, and told me of her birth-place, and early religious impressions, and the advantages she had enjoyed; and added, "When I was young, my dear and pious mother died. My father had previously been taken from me, and when my parents were gone, I was left to my own discretion. I had nothing of a worldly nature to detain me at home, and knowing that I had relations in this country, I resolved to be with them, and hither I came.

Here I have received great kindness; indeed I have had every thing that earth could give, but I have not been happy! O no! I have not been happy. I knew too much of my Bible to be happy. I had heard and seen too much of religion to be happy. I felt the vanity of the world, even when I was most occupied in it. I cut myself off from religious privileges, and it has made me miserable."

"How have you spent your time here?"

"Why, I have been chiefly engaged in travelling either in this country, or in neighbouring countries."

"How have you spent your sabbaths?"—No answer, but a gush of tears. "Have you frequently gone to places of worship?"

"No; I have seldom been at a place where I could understand the church language; and since my return here, I have been so completely occupied, that I could only attend chapel about four times, and even when I was there it made me miserable, All that I heard seemed to be against me. The invitations and promises, as well as the threatenings, were as so many daggers in my breast, and a thunderbolt to me. I thought I should have fainted."

"Then the sum total of your history appears to be this:—you had been well instructed in divine things when you were at home, but since you have come hither you have slighted them. Yet you had too much light to be happy while you were thus neglecting the great salvation. O what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul!"

"Ah, yes," said she, "that is it; and now I am miserable."

I replied, "It would be strange if you were not miserable; but recollect it is a great mercy for you that your conscience is not seared as with a hot iron; that God hath not said respecting you, 'Let her alone;' that the Spirit whom you have grieved has not ceased to strive with you. Yes, I consider it a great mercy that your mind is so much alive to the solemnity of your situation. But do not despond. You say you are miserable, and you know there is only one remedy for miserable sinners: take that remedy. Embrace the Saviour. Trust in the merits of his blood, and fear not. Flee to that refuge. Christ is the sinner's Friend, and you have slighted him. But now, even now, turn to him, believe in him, and you shall be saved!"

A pause ensued; I left her to her own reflections. After a few minutes, which, I doubt not, had been spent in meditation and prayer, I said to her, "Can you repeat any hymns which refer to the atonement of Christ?'

"Yes," she replied, "I can repeat many. I have just been teaching a beautiful one to Mary," (a sweet little girl who sat by her side.) She then began it:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there would I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away."

At this her feelings overcame her, and she could proceed no further.

After a few days I called again, and was happy to find her more composed and tranquil. "I begin to hope," said she, "that I shall yet obtain mercy; that God will not cast me off; that the Saviour will not reject me."

"What leads you thus to hope? Do you think that you are better than you were before?"

"No; I am not looking to myself, but to the word, the promise, and to the oath of God, that 'we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast.'"

This visit was to me both edifying and comforting. We had much conversation, and that part which she took in it discovered the very interesting state of her mind. Among other things she said, in a most solemn manner, "I have been looking back on my past life, and I am mortified and ashamed, and humbled at the review. Oh what have I been doing! How have I wasted my precious time! I have been grasping at shadows! I have been feeding on husks! A deceived heart has turned me aside!" These words were spoken with much difficulty, in a low tone, and with long pauses between. She added, "I have been thinking of others also. The world is in a dangerous condition. I see it now. Yes; sacred things are almost universally neglected. Oh could I but make m feeble voice heard, I

would tell them all of their fearful condition. Will you, sir, warn them to flee from the wrath to come?"

I replied, "I will do what I can; but I am afraid we shall obtain only a partial hearing. Men are too much engrossed by worldly things. The chains of sin are too strong upon them. The god of this world hath blinded the eyes, and hardened the hearts of most men; and what makes it the more alarming, is the fact, that they have no apprehension of their danger. But let us do what we can, and, above all, let us abound in prayer. Let us call down Omnipotence to our help, for God can change the hardest heart. Let us pray."

It gave me great delight to behold in Miss P. so much solicitude for the souls of her relatives. This is a good sign that the salvation of Christ is valued.

More than four weeks had now passed away since my first interview. A great change had passed on her countenance, and it was evident that "the earthly house of her tabernacle" would soon be dissolved; but her intellect remained strong and clear, and a sweet calm gradually took possession of her breast. During the last day or two of her life she could not speak so as to be heard distinctly, but the third day before her spirit took its flight, she said to her friend, "I am going; the struggle will soon be over. I am happy—I am happy." And on the day six weeks after I first saw her, she was carried to her grave.

Standing, as it were, by her side once more, and seeing myself surrounded by several classes of persons, I would address a few words to each of them.

I. To parents.

Consider the importance of early religious instruction. Your children may, in numerous instances, lose their beloved parents, as this young woman did, and be left to struggle through the world without the guidance and protection of father or mother. Some of them may also, like her, travel to foreign lands, and there sicken and die. Now what can they do without the supports and consolations of the gospel? What will become of them if they live without Christ, and without hope? You know how full of allurements and snares the world is, and you know how easily young people are fascinated by its charms. Even where the mind has been well stored with divine truth, and where children have been trained up in the nurture and

admonition of the Lord, it is exceedingly dangerous to send them where God is scarcely known or feared. It is very little better than throwing them into a den of lions, or binding them hand and foot, and casting them into a burning fiery furnace. If they escape unhurt, it must be by a miracle. Yet there is always some hope of those who have been religiously educated. There is always a chord in their heart, which vibrates at the touch of the word of God. They will never forget their pious mother's admonitions. A father's prayers will sometimes ring in their ears, and bring them to a stand. The hymns and chapters which they committed to memory, under the parental roof, will be like so many spears in their sides to urge them to duty; or so many reins about their neck to hold them back from sin. And even on a dying bed these instructions may be of infinite advantage to them. Mark the effect it produced on Miss P. Therefore parents, go forward with the delightful work of endeavouring to lead your children to the Saviour. Commit them to Him, and pray and hope to meet them all before the throne of God. But, remember, if you neglect their souls, whatever accomplishments you may give them, do not expect to see them at the right hand of God. Rather expect to see yourselves and your offspring suffering beneath his awful frown.

II. To those who attend the sick and dying.

The greatest proof of love to your afflicted friends is to act towards them with christian fidelity. That is a false tenderness which would lead a sinner or a saint to attempt to draw comfort from his own works; and, alas! it is a bad sign respecting those who wish to administer such poor consolation. It is but too plain that their own views both of sin and salvation are very defective. Mr. Cecil mentions a case of this kind. He had been conversing with an afflicted man about the evils of his conduct, when his wife interrupted Mr. Cecil, by assuring him that her husband had been an excellent man. "Silence," said the dying penitent, "it is all true!"

Something not unlike to this took place at the dying bed of Miss P. Her friend and benefactress praised her, and wondered how one who had lived as she had, could now be distressed. But it would not do. A wounded spirit, a conscience burdened with guilt, rejects all such support! O ye that stand around the dying bed do not flatter. They must

have a Saviour, or they are lost; a Redeemer, or they perish. Take away every false prop. Break down every refuge of lies. Strip the sinner of every self-righteous plea, point to the Lord Jesus Christ, and then pour in the consolations of the gospel.

Lastly, I would give a word of advice to those young people who have thoughts of going to reside in foreign lands.

Dear young friends. If your hearts are devoted to God, and you walk in that holy and watchful, and consistent and useful manner, which becometh disciples of Christ; then you may prove unspeakable blessings; then your light will shine before men, and you will glorify your Father in heaven; then many a poor sinner may have reason to bless God for you, through the countless ages of eternity. But forget not that there are peculiar dangers in this path. I believe comparatively few leave the land of their nativity without suffering spiritual loss. I speak guardedly; but my situation has afforded me too many opportunities, alas! for making observations on this subject; and I would strenuously urge all whom I love, never to leave a place where the gospel is preached, for another where the gospel is not preached, even if they might gain a province by the change. Ah, when you come where I saw Miss P., upon a dying bed, it will matter very little, whether you have travelled through the world on foot or in a carriage; whether you have lived in a cottage or a palace. All these little things will be lost sight of amidst the infinitely important consideration, "Is my soul safe? Are my sins pardoned? Shall I be saved or lost? Will the Judge of quick and dead acquit me or condemn me? Shall I hear him say, Come, ye blessed—or, Depart, ye cursed?"

Be assured, dear young people, that a well grounded hope of salvation through Christ, and a life of communion with God, are of far greater importance than all the world can give, or take away. And O delay not; you may have no space given you for repentance. "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 6

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SOME ACCOUNT

OF

JOHN KNILL;

WRITTEN BY HIS FATHER.

MORE than fourteen years have rolled away since the cholera, like a desolating scourge, has been depopulating the earth. It first made its appearance in India, where its fatal influence spread rapidly. It turned nearly every house into a house of mourning, and many totally lost their inhabitants. The rich were not spared, but it raged chiefly among the poor. Foreigners, as well as natives, became its victims; and, after it had hurried multitudes to the grave, it travelled westward to Persia. From Persia it crossed the Russian frontier, and, in 1824, it commenced its ravages in Astrachan. About the month of July, 1830, it broke out a second time in Astrachan, and in a few weeks carried off several thousands of its inhabitants. The chief men of the city died of it. When the disease was at its height, more than five hundred persons died in one day.

At the close of the same year, the cholera reached Moscow, and its effects produced a dreadful panic on the minds of the people. In this season of deep distress, the emperor of Russia hastened to console and aid his afflicted subjects; and, after continuing with them until the malady began to abate, he returned to St. Petersburg, and was restored to his anxious and loving family in peace.

When the disease was raging in Moscow, great fears were excited respecting it in St. Petersburg, and great preparations were made to prevent its entrance, or to stop its progress if it came; but no symptoms of it appeared for

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many months. At last it came, and an awful visitation it has been to many.

It broke out in St. Petersburg on the 14th of June, O. S., 1831. In the evening of that day it was reported, that a man belonging to the barks which trade with the interior had been attacked with cholera. This was the commencement of the malady, and it increased at a fearful rate, until its ravages became tremendous. For a time business of every kind was nearly at a stand. In some streets scarcely any thing was seen moving but funeral processions; "man going to his long home," and a few, very few, mourners following their friends to the house appointed for all living. About the beginning of July, the number of deaths gradually diminished, and at the latter end of that month the disease had nearly disappeared.

John Knill, whose death is here recorded, was three years and eleven months old. It will be seen that the cholera had been raging in the city for several days, but we had no fears respecting our children being affected with it, for we had been informed that it was chiefly confined to adults; but painful experience has since taught us that it is not confined to any sex or age. The prince and the peasant have fallen beneath its fatal stroke.

On the evening preceding his death, John retired to rest in his usual health. When the cholera attacked him, it seemed to seize his heart, and to oppress the vitals with increasing violence until he expired. His hands and feet almost immediately became cold; his sparkling eyes sunk deep into their sockets; the pulse nearly ceased, and a peculiar degree of languor seized his whole body. In this state of exhaustion, he looked around upon his affectionate mother and friends with indescribable tenderness; until, amidst our tears and sighs, and prayers, and efforts, of no common nature, he ceased to breathe. He was attacked in the morning, died at noon, and in the evening was carried to his grave. Thus suddenly was the flower cut down. Thus quickly did death execute his commission. Thus in one short day all our early hopes respecting him were blasted; but we have hopes that will flourish for ever.

His bereaved parents have a thousand fond recollections of what he did and said, but there are six things which we trust will be beneficial to some who may read this short narrative.

1. His early co-operation in circulating the holy Scriptures and tracts.

He was not quite two years old when the following circumstance took place. A glazier was mending my window, and John, and his brother, and their nurse stood by looking at him. While the man was busy at his work, this little darling pulled him by the apron, and said to him, "Brother," the usual salutation among Russians, "brother, can you read?" At first the man took no notice of the child, but finding him continue [illegible] rattle, he said to the nurse, "Does the child speak to [illegible]"—"Yes." "What does he say?"—"Listen to him." The child then repeated the question, "Brother, can you read?"—"Yes," replied the man. "Have you a New Testament?" said John.—"No." As soon as he found that the glazier had not a Testament, he walked to the room in which they were kept, and, having obtained one, carried it to him immediately. The nurse perceiving what was done, remarked, "John, you have not done this properly; you ought to have found a verse for the man to read."—"Yes, yes," said he, and in turning over the leaves he promiscuously pointed to that striking passage, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," Matt. vi. 6. "Well," said the man, "this is strange indeed!"

These questions the child frequently heard addressed to persons who came to our house, but we had no idea of his adopting the same plan unsolicited. It shows us at what an early age children are capable of imitating the examples around them; and fathers and mothers may learn from it what a tremendous responsibility is attached to the parental character.

Since the above period, many hundreds of people have come to our house, some for books, others for clothes, &c., but I do not recollect that John ever saw any of these people without asking either his mother or myself, "May I give that person a tract?" and sometimes without our knowledge he has supplied them.

Only the day before he died, I received a package of French and German tracts from the Tract Society in London, and one of his last acts was to assist his brother in bringing these tracts to me to the place where I wished to

put them. His words still sound in my ear as he approached me with his arms full, and his face flushed with animation, exclaiming, "Here, papa, see how many I bring!"

Parents who read this will, we trust, be encouraged and stimulated to initiate their children early into those ways which lead to usefulness as well as happiness. Impressions made on the minds of children are generally deep and lasting. Good habits early formed are of incalculable advantage through life. The voice of Wisdom says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." This may be considered as a general rule; and daily observation confirms it as an interesting fact. We wished to be guided by this rule in the education of our offspring. Our hearts' desire for them was that they might always be occupied in diffusing the knowledge of God; and now John is removed from our feeble instruction to a higher school, we are thankful that he had begun, though unconsciously, to do something for the good of mankind.

2. I shall state his manner of giving reproofs.

John was very playful and noisy, while his disposition was exceedingly sweet, though resolute and determined. He had two brothers, one younger, and the other older. To his younger brother he would easily yield up any thing, and say, "O Joseph! he is only a baby; he must have it." But with his elder brother there was frequently an argument respecting their playthings, and, when John thought that his brother was wrong, he would say very gravely, "O Samuel! God does not love that, Christ does not love that."

Every morning when they came to the breakfast-table, they repeated the commandment, "Honour thy father and mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee;" and, when they perceived anything in each other's conduct which was contrary to this command, they would frequently remind each other by saying, "Honour thy father and thy mother."

It is a solemn thought, that almost every action of some men's lives is displeasing to God. Had these persons a kind and faithful monitor near them, he would say to them a thousand times in a day, "Ah, sir! God does not love that,—ah, madam! Christ does not love that." And is it not dreadful to live a life of constant rebellion against our

Creator and Redeemer? Dear reader, try yourself by this touchstone; ask yourself often, Will God be pleased with this part of my conduct? Will Christ approve this conversation? Shall I be able to give a good account of this act before the judgment-seat? and if conscience says, No,—if your Bible says, No,—then reject it: put it away from you; flee from it as from a serpent. The cholera morbus is dreadful,—the plague is dreadful,—but sinning against God is much more dreadful, for that will ruin both body and soul. Hear the words of the Saviour on this point: "I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that can kill the body, but after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him, who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."

3. His observations respecting a departed christian.

Mrs. Chapman died four days before this dear child. She was formerly the mistress of a Lancasterian school in Canada. About three years since she came to St. Petersburg, to take charge of a school on the same system, in which she gave great satisfaction. Her heart was much set on doing good to the children of her charge, and we hoped that she would long be spared to be a blessing in her important sphere; but on Friday, June 26, O. S., she was attacked with cholera; a fatal day in St. Petersburg; for, among the hundreds of persons who were this day attacked, it is supposed that scarcely one recovered. She struggled until four the next morning, and then entered into the joy of her Lord. She left a delightful testimony to the love and faithfulness of God. Her Saviour was very precious to her. His rod and his staff comforted her. In the evening of the same day she was buried in the ground appointed expressly for those who died of cholera; and my dear little boy was afterwards placed with her in the same grave. I mentioned some particulars respecting this pious woman to my family. John listened, and, after pausing some time, he said to me, "Papa, is Mrs. Chapman dead?"—"Yes, my dear." "Then she is gone to heaven, papa."—"Yes." "Then she is with Christ, papa."—"Yes, my dear." "Oh that is very good." These were delightful observations for a child under four years of age; yet I have no idea that he knew anything about the nature of religion as a system. He frequently made remarks to his mother and to his pious

nurse, and sometimes he came and clasped me round the neck, and said, "Papa, I love God, I love Christ;" and then walked off, singing,

"Lord, in the morning thou shalt hear
My voice ascending high."

These things I consider merely as good habits, the seeds which by the grace of God would have sprung up if he had lived; but he knew nothing doctrinally of man being a sinner, and Christ being the only Saviour, and he could not comprehend this as older persons do. The observations I have made are to show how far good teaching and good example will go to form good habits and good modes of thinking in a child; and I pray that every parent who may read this, may feel a fresh stimulus to sow good seed in the minds of their offspring, before the soil is preoccupied. Parents, remember that to instil one good thought, to produce one good desire in the heart of your child, is infinitely more important than the discovery of a gold mine. No mortal can conceive what blessings may flow from it, both in this world and in that which is to come.

4. The last thing I shall notice respecting this dear child is,—the gracious providence of God overruling the solemn event of his death, for a peculiar blessing to a young man who witnessed his agonies. The evening before he died we had two friends with us, one from America, and a young friend from England. On retiring to rest, John came and embraced his American friend, and, with a sweet smile, said, "Good night, my dearest Mr. ———;" and he shook hands with our other friend. They never saw him again until he was seized. When the alarm was given that he was attacked with cholera, we were watching around the bed of his brother Joseph, who had been dying all the preceding night, but now the necessities of John called for every help that could be given him; therefore I was left with the dying child, to moisten his parched lips, while his mother and the servants hastened to John. Our young friend perceiving the child in great distress, sat down by his bed-side, and for some time assisted in rubbing his hands, then he ran to the apothecary's for medicine, but on his return he found that medicine could be of no service; the spasms had ceased, the sufferings were over, the heart no longer palpitated; the spirit of our darling was gone! The suddenness of his death produced amazement and

alarm. The scene was truly awful; the shock which it gave to every one of us cannot be described. At this moment our young friend returned, and so deeply impressed was he with what he saw, that he entered into his closet, and shut the door, and cried unto that God and Saviour whose redeeming love and mercy he had never truly sought before.

I repeat his own words which he spoke to me almost the last time before he left this country: "Ah! sir, the day on which your John died will ever be a memorable day to me. It will form a new era in my existence. I shall look back to it as the time when I became truly in earnest about my soul. I had often seen the importance of religion before, but then I felt the absolute need of it. I have been brought up with religious people, and have read, and seen, and heard much on religious subjects, but I never felt it before. This was a penetrating work; indeed, I was greatly afraid. I thought, It is not improbable I may be cut off as suddenly as Johnny, and then what will be the consequence? Where shall I appear? I have no hope. I must trifle no longer. I then sought retirement; I went into your study, and there remained for about two hours; and I trust I was sincere in seeking mercy of the Lord, and in yielding up myself to be his servant for ever."

"Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Our child had been the subject of our constant prayers, but we never once implored riches, or honours, or earthly glory for him. Our prayer was, that, like John the Baptist, he might "be great in the sight of the Lord," and be enabled to "turn many of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just;" and such is our conviction of the worth of souls, that we should have considered it an unspeakable privilege if, after a long life of arduous toil, he had been the instrument of bringing one sinner to Jesus. Oh then what a consolation to our wounded spirits to be permitted to hope that this work so glorious—a sinner brought to Jesus—was in any way accelerated by his early death! To God be the glory for ever. Amen.

It is a very alarming circumstance, that vast multitudes live day after day like the young man just mentioned, without

paying any regard to their precious souls, and, though conscious that this important point is neglected, yet still go on procrastinating until it is too late. Dreadful infatuation! perhaps some persons, both young and old, may read these pages, who are precisely in this state; they are not prepared to meet their Judge: they know not the blessedness of the man whose sins are pardoned; they are not justified by faith, and consequently have not obtained peace with God through Jesus our Lord; and can there be a case more alarming than this?

Dear reader, suppose that in this unprepared state you should be seized with some affliction which should bring you suddenly to the grave. Oh what consequences must follow! When infants die we know that they are happy; but, when a man or woman dies, the case is very different: we must look for evidence of repentance and faith before we can entertain hope respecting them; and where would you appear? Ah! you would be left without a friend, without a remedy, without hope. Listen, then, oh listen to the voice of friendship; delay not another moment; let the great work of religion, from this day, become the grand business of your life. Salvation you must obtain, or you will perish: salvation is offered to you freely; Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; he casts out none that come to him. Oh then study the character and work of Christ; behold the necessity and the suitableness of his atonement; embrace this adorable Saviour; give up your souls to him, cleave to him, believe on him, and you shall be saved.

Finally, I beseech you do not put off the momentous concerns of eternity. You may be attacked with sudden illness of some kind; you will have no time then; therefore "let your loins be girded, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men who wait for their lord, that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom their lord when he cometh shall find watching."

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THE

THREE ENGLISH SAILORS.

ON the 23rd of November, 1831, as I was passing through the streets of a city in the north of Europe, I saw three young English sailors. The sight of them filled me with apprehensions that some disaster had befallen them, for it is not usual to see British sailors in a northern port at this late season of the year. Therefore I hailed them; "What ship, my lads?" "The Vigilant." "Where is she?" At this question they all shook their heads, and George, the mate, answered, "Indeed, sir, she lies a wreck near Hogland." "All the crew are saved, I hope." "Yes, all." "Well," said I, "this is a call for devout thanksgiving to God, your preserver. You might have found a watery grave? you might have been hurried into the presence of your Judge. Yea, you might have been in hell. Where are you bound now?" "We arrived here two hours ago, from Fredericksham, and to-morrow morning we shall depart for Cronstadt, where we hope to find a ship to take us home." "Have you seen the consul?" "O yes, and he has been very kind to us." "Well, my lads, all these things should fill your hearts with praise. Have you a Bible?" "Yes, we have one amongst us." "That will do. Read it with prayer, daily. That book is a safe chart; no mariner ever steered his course by it, but arrived safely at last in that happy state where all is purity and bliss. Have you any other book beside the Bible?" "No, not one." "Would you like to have some?" "If you please." "Then come along with me." So I took them to my house, and furnished them with the Saint's Everlasting Rest; the Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul; the Annals of the Poor; a copy of Dr. Watts's Hymns; and some beautiful English and American tracts.

George stopped to dine with us, while Robert and Andrew went to their lodgings.

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I was anxious to find out whether these fine young men were acquainted with the laudable exertions of the present day for the spiritual improvement of sailors. And when I had George alone, I said to him, "Do you know any thing about the Bethels?" "Know any thing about them, sir!" said he, "why, we had a Bethel flag on board our own ship. This last summer we were at Archangel, when about three hundred sail were lying there, and every Sunday you might have seen three or four Bethel flags flying at once. About seventy men once came to our ship to hold Divine service." "Who officiated?" "Several captains and sailors took part in the service." "Well, George, this is delightful! This is wonderful! You who go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters, see many of the wonders of the Lord in the deep. But to see the Bethel flag waving at Archangel, and to see twenty ships' companies meeting together for prayer, is the greatest wonder of all. After this who will say any thing is too hard for the Lord? Now we may well hope to see every ship manned with pious sailors!"

At last the hour arrived for chapel, and I said to George, "Will you and your shipmates go with us?" "By all means, sir."

As we were walking along together to the house of prayer, I confess I felt very deeply for these shipwrecked mariners: and in my sermon I mentioned the case to the congregation, and several of my friends felt a peculiar pleasure in furnishing them with a few guineas for pocket money. As I put the last sum into the hands of the mate, he exclaimed, "Indeed, sir, we shall have so much money that we shall not know what to do with it."

A little before their departure I called upon them at their lodgings, and found them in their bed-rooms, each one reading the precious volumes with which they had been furnished. It gave me great joy to see them so occupied.

I said to them, "My young friends, it is rather singular that we should ever have met."

"Yes, indeed, sir," they replied, "it was a kind providence for us."

"And now we are going to part. Perhaps we shall never meet again until the voyage of life is over. How ought we to part? Should we not go to prayer?"

"If you please," they all replied.

We then kneeled down before the throne of grace, and a

more solemn and affecting season I have seldom witnessed When we arose from our knees, the big tear was rolling down Robert's manly cheek, and though he tried to conceal it, he could not. Perhaps, thought I, the angels are beginning to rejoice over him as a sinner brought to repentance.

Andrew also showed evident marks of deep inward emotion, when we spoke of the need of pardon, and of the danger of neglecting the precious soul. I was happy to see his cheek moisten too. The mate and myself, though our hearts seemed harder than our neighbours, were not without feeling at this interesting scene: and, I hope, we shall never forget it.

Since I shook them by the hand, a thousand thoughts have passed through my mind respecting them.

First. I thought on the moral improvement of sailors.

These young men were in the very bloom of youth, just at an age when the passions are strong, and when, among sailors, it too frequently is the custom to indulge in swearing, cursing, and obscene conversation; and I could not help contrasting the conduct of these young men with the conduct of many whom I knew in former times.

Second. I thought of the unspeakable blessing which will surely result from attention to the souls of sailors.

Every scriptural method which is adopted to lead sinners to repentance is sure to be blessed. Heaven does and will smile upon it. It is the work of God. It is the Saviour calling men to flee from the wrath to come. They hear the inviting voice of the Son of God, saying, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Since attention has been given to the souls of sailors, we can find scores of pious captains, and hundreds of pious seamen. Formerly it was not so. It was thought almost impossible. Sailors were considered very sinful and very hopeless creatures; and therefore no efforts were made to save them. Oh that was a happy day on which the first grand effort was made to evangelize the multitudes who plough the mighty deep. May the choicest blessings of Heaven rest on all of every denomination who labour in this important work!

Third. I thought how desirable it is to meet the warm hearts of sailors with kind and generous treatment.

I have almost shed tears of joy at the providence of God which brought me into contact with these three shipwrecked mariners; and I would not have missed the joy and delight

which have flown into my own heart from it for a ship load of silver. Reader, if ever you should fall in with a sailor in distress, O be kind to him, comfort him, help him; give him a Bible if he has none. Speak to him of a Saviour. Direct him to Christ. It may be of advantage to him. I am sure it will be of advantage to you. The finger of Providence often brings things in our way, which if rightly improved, may be of eternal benefit to many. It may hide a multitude of sins, and save a soul from death.

Fourth. How important it is for sailors to be prepared to meet their God!

Ah! my brave tars! there is no time for repentance when the ship is going down! If your sins are not pardoned, you are not ready. And are yours pardoned? Have you ever applied to Christ, the sinner's Friend, to grant you forgiveness? Have you ever, under a feeling of your danger, committed yourself into the hands of this mighty Saviour, that he might keep you from all evil, and bring you safely into his heavenly kingdom?

Fifth. I thought of the happiness of that sailor who has obtained peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, he must be happy, indeed. That man is prepared for every event. Though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the depths of the sea; though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled, and the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, yet the Lord of hosts is with him, the God of Jacob is his refuge; and how desirable is this for you?

Beloved reader, do not rest day or night, until you can say, as one said, who was shipwrecked before you were born, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. v. 1. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life," Rom. v. 8—10.

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THE FALSE HOPE.

GOD often produces great effects from little causes, but it has seldom been more strikingly displayed than in the circumstances about to be narrated.

Many years ago I was addressing a strange congregation, and took for my text the words of the apostle, "Good hope through grace." In opening the subject, I introduced the following narrative :—

A student for the Christian ministry was brought, in the course of providence, into the company of a young lady who was just recovering from a dangerous illness. She was still very weak, but liked, as most persons do when recovering, to tell how much she had suffered, and how wonderful was the preservation of her life.

Among other things she said, "At one time I sent for my aged parents, and my beloved brothers and sisters; and took, as I thought, my last farewell of them. Both the physicians had given me up, and my friends expected to see me no more."

As she finished this sentence, the student said to her, "We seldom meet with a person who has been so near to death as you have been. Pray tell me what were your feelings when you were on the verge of eternity."

"I was happy," she replied.

"And will you please to tell me what were your prospects?"

"I hoped to go to heaven, of course."

"Had you no doubts, no fears, no suspicions?"

"None."

"Perhaps almost all hope to go to heaven. But I fear, said the young man, "there are very few who have a good foundation for their hope. Pray on what was your hope founded?"

"Founded!" she replied. "Why I had never injured

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any person; and I had endeavoured to do all the good in my power. Was not this sufficient?"

"It is a delightful reflection," said the student, "that you have never injured any person; and it is still more delightful to think that you have done all the good in your power. But even this is a poor foundation for a sinner to rest upon. Was this the foundation of your hope?"

She seemed quite astonished at this question, and eagerly inquired, "Was not this sufficient?"

The student did not give her a direct answer, but observed, "I am very thankful that you did not then die."

"What! do you think I should not have gone to heaven?"

"I am sure you could not in the way you mentioned. Do you not perceive that according to your plan you were going to heaven without Christ? This is what no sinner has done since Adam fell, and what no sinner will be able to do while the world stands. Be very thankful that you did not go out of life resting on this delusive foundation. Jesus says, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.'"

God carried home this word to her soul. Light broke in upon her mind. From that day a decided change took place in the young lady's views; and a corresponding holiness, and love, and zeal, and usefulness adorned all her future life.

Before I had finished this short narrative, there was a mild, sedate-looking person in the congregation deeply affected. The tears were streaming down his placid cheeks, and, although he tried to conceal them, yet he could not. He was unknown to me at that time, but he has since proved one of my most affectionate and devoted friends. Not many weeks passed before I received a visit from this friend, when the following conversation took place:—

"I am come, sir, to tell you what the Lord has done for my soul."

"Welcome, welcome," said the preacher. "There are no visits so much to be desired as those which refer to eternity. Then tell me what the Lord has done for your soul."

"O," replied the happy man, "he hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad. My experience is much like

that described by St. Peter, 'Whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' "

"This is happiness, indeed, sir; may it ever continue. Have you been long favoured with it?"

"Not long," said he. "Alas! more than forty years passed away before I knew any thing about it. I often had serious thoughts of eternity. I often meditated on the character of God. I often thought of the state of man; and I saw such infinite perfection in the Creator, and felt so many evils in myself, that at last I concluded it was impossible for man—polluted, guilty man—to be admitted into heaven; and I sought for peace in the doctrine of annihilation:—I say, I sought for peace in this doctrine, but I found it not. The thought would often occur, Suppose after all you should be mistaken; suppose there should be a resurrection of the dead; suppose you should be judged for the deeds done in the body, what then? What will become of you? These thoughts, and thoughts like these, broke up all the system in a moment, and made me uneasy; and it is very strange that all this while the doctrine of Christ's atonement was hid from my eyes. I must have heard of it, and read of it, times innumerable. My parents were religious people, and brought me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. When I was young, I regularly attended the ministry of the word; and all the grand outlines of the Bible have been familiar to me from my childhood, and yet I was as ignorant of the way of salvation as if I had never seen a Bible! I had no conception how God could be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Yes, it was on this point I was completely in the dark; and so it remained until the morning when you related the anecdote about the young lady."

"And what effect did the relation of that anecdote produce?"

"Indeed, sir, it was wonderful. While you were showing the fallacy of her hope, and declaring that Jesus Christ is the only hope of the lost; that none can come unto the Father but by him; a flood of light burst upon my mind. I saw the whole plan of salvation with as much distinctness as if I had studied the subject for a thousand years. All that I had read and heard on the subject seemed to rush on my memory at once. I could have explained it to all the world,

I was overwhelmed with joy. I saw the fulness, the freeness, the all-sufficiency of Christ in such a clear and glorious manner, that if I had possessed ten thousand souls, I could have committed them all into his hands, and I did embrace him with joy unspeakable. Indeed, I could have rejoiced that moment to have escaped from this earthly tabernacle, and to have entered the happy world 'where Jesus is incessantly adored.'"

Such impassioned language coming from a young man of warm temperament would have almost excited our fears; but here I saw a model of meekness, and prudence, and thoughtfulness, and sedateness; a Christian opening his mind for the first time in his life on the subject of experimental religion, and in such a way as filled my soul with praise.

Reader, is there not a power, secret, invisible, omnipotent, which often accompanies the pious conversation, and the preached word?

Pause—consider. Hast thou felt it?

Is not this power absolutely needful to drive the sinner from delusive hopes, and to bring him to rest entirely on the merits of Jesus? Dost thou see the need of it as it regards thyself and all thy dealings with the souls of others? Then ask it of God.

May it not be feared that many will read this paper whose hope of heaven is not better than the young lady's was at the moment when she said, "I hope to go to heaven of course;" and why? Because she had not injured any person, and because she had endeavoured to befriend her fellow-creatures! O reader, away with all such hopes. "Behold," saith the Lord God, "I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation, and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." This foundation is Christ. Rest here, and you are safe.

Why is it that even pious people have not more joy in their experience?—Because their views of Christ are not sufficiently clear; or else their faith in him is mingled with some secret trusting to a broken reed.

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THE MOUNTAIN MILLER

IT is the glory of the gospel, that it is adapted to the circumstances and wants of all; and equally to the glory of its great Author, that, while he "inhabiteth eternity," he condescends to "dwell with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Such was eminently the character of the individual whose history is now presented to the reader, in a simple, unexaggerated narrative of facts.

I first became acquainted with Joseph Beals, which is the real name of the subject of this narrative, about the year 1800. He lived in one of the then recent settlements on the beautiful range of the Green Mountains, which extend, in a northerly direction, near the western boundary, and through almost the whole of New England, North America. I have learned that he was born, June, 1752, in Bridgewater, a few miles from Boston, in Massachusetts; and that he early imbibed what, as he approached to manhood, became the fixed, and, but for the grace of God arresting him, had proved the fatal opinion, that external morality, without a change of heart, is sufficient to secure the salvation of the soul. Pecuniary embarrassments induced him, in 1779, to seek a residence for himself and a rising family among the forests of the mountains, where his axe soon laid open a spot sufficiently large for the erection of a cottage, the sides of which were composed of the logs he had felled, and the roof was covered with bark or flat slips of wood.

He continued to make new inroads upon the forest, and, at length, by the fruits of his industry, succeeded in providing for his wife and little ones a more convenient, though humble habitation, and in storing it with a sufficiency of the necessaries of life. Here, when nothing occurred to

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persuade him to omit the duty, he frequently called his household around him to offer their morning and evening devotions; for, having undertaken to procure heaven by his own righteousness, he thought family worship must constitute a part of it. And so watchful was he over his conduct in other respects, that, excepting his moroseness, his unyielding temper, his frequent murmurings against the allotments of Providence, and his opposition to the distinguishing doctrines of evangelical religion, his life was, in the view of those around him, blameless.

Such was Joseph Beals, when, in 1789, a year of great scarcity of provisions, God saw fit to teach him the true character of his heart by laying his hand upon him in a very afflictive dispensation. Being absent from home one evening, with his wife, at about eight o'clock the alarm was given that his house was on fire. The flames had proceeded too far to be arrested. The house was consumed, and with it nearly all the provisions he had laid in store. Thus perished in an hour the fruits of his labour, which for nearly ten years he had been collecting; and the wretchedness of absolute famine stared him in the face.

Here he found, probably for the first time, that he had no true submission to the will of God. He could not say, "Thy will be done." His heart repined against Him who, as he knew, orders all things well, and whose kind preservation of his children called loudly for his gratitude. This led him seriously to question whether his religion was such as would stand the final test. He could not endure the trials of this life, and he trembled in prospect of the retributions of eternity. For a time he sought to banish the unwelcome reflection, amid his strenuous exertions to provide for his family the means of subsistence; but when the abundant crops of the succeeding summer removed the occasion of this anxiety, his relish for earthly pursuits died away, and he became equally wearied with his fruitless endeavours to work out a righteousness of his own.

Thus was he prepared, in the mysterious providence of God, for the visit of the Holy Spirit to "convince him of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come." He was brought to see that the law of God is "exceeding broad," extending not to the external actions merely, but to "the thoughts and intents of the heart;" that his sins were immeasurably great; that "all his righteousnesses were

as filthy rags;" and that the day of judgment, which shall try men's souls, was but a little way before him. He saw the wrath of God revealed against him, and neither acquiesced in its justice, nor perceived any way of escape. He betook himself to the Scriptures, and began to search them in earnest for relief, but they seemed to contain no promises or blessings for him. He was ready to despair of ever finding mercy. Every day, and sometimes every hour of the day, he would retire to the forest, and there attempt to breathe out his prayer to the God who reared the stately trees, and against whom he had so grievously offended.

Every thing he met seemed to concur with the accusings of his own conscience in showing him the magnitude of his sins, and deepening his impressions of the dread realities of a judgment day. When husking his Indian corn, with his little sons beside him, the separation of the ripe ears so forcibly reminded him of the awful separation of that day, when he expected to hear the sentence, "Depart, ye cursed," that he could not continue his work, but was compelled abruptly to retire. Under these impressions, he went to his impenitent wife, thinking that he could convince her of the danger to which they were both exposed; but he found that the Lord only can affect the heart.

Thus he continued borne down with a sense of his sinfulness, and of "the wrath of God abiding on him;" recurring to his Bible, and then to his consecrated place of prayer; silently presenting himself wherever any were assembled for the worship of God, and using all the external means of grace, till one morning as he was about to close his prayer with his family, he suddenly broke forth in new strains of devotion, penitence, and praise for redeeming love; and continued praying, apparently insensible to the progress of time, as his family believed, for more than an hour.

To his children, this fervour, as well as the previous anguish of his spirit, appeared quite unaccountable; for they seemed scarcely to have heard that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3; or to have known any thing of the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost. But his wife, who had recently witnessed some other instances of deep sorrow on account of sin, which had been followed by joy and peace in believing, feared that the same result was about to be realized in her husband, and to her impatient and unhumbled

spirit the season of prayer was tedious almost beyond endurance.

In the husband and father was shown the temper of one whose heart had been softened by Divine grace, and broken on account of sin, and whose mouth was filled with arguments by the manifestations of redeeming love and mercy, pleading with God with the earnestness of his own dear children, and refusing to let him go without his blessing. In the wife and mother was manifested the proud spirit, which would not accept of mercy for herself, nor consent to its being bestowed upon her husband; but she knew not what blessings were to descend on her and her children in answer to his prayers.

The reality of what she feared soon became too evident to be questioned. Her husband enjoyed a cheering hope of his acceptance in Jesus Christ—a hope which the reader will not be disposed to think unfounded when he learns the fruits by which it was accompanied, in that best of all evidences, a holy life. Such fruits of the Spirit are the chief evidences of saving conversion. Whether the hour of our deliverance from condemnation be known to us, as was joyfully the case with the subject of this narrative, or not, the grand question to be solved is, whether we have surrendered our hearts to Christ; whether, whereas once we were blind, now we see; whether we have now the graces of the Spirit in exercise, proving our union with Christ. The manner of the Spirit's operations in different minds is very diverse; the radical change from sin to holiness is essentially the same in all who are savingly converted to God.

From the time of his conversion, his heart became engaged in all those religious duties which he had hitherto performed with a cold formality. His hopes of salvation, which before were grounded on his morality, he now rested on the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and repentance and faith were wrought in him by the operations of the Holy Spirit. His own sinfulness appeared greater than ever before; but he saw there was perfect efficacy in the blood of the Lamb of God to take away all his sins. His irritable temper became mild and lost in love to God and man. He became an example of meekness and devotion to the cause of his Redeemer; and early in 1791 publicly consecrated himself to him, by uniting with a small evangelical church which had been formed in the district where he resided.

Immediately after his conversion he began to pray and labour for the salvation of his family, instructing them from the Scriptures, and urging upon them the duty of submitting themselves without delay to Christ. Especially was he solicitous for the salvation of his wife, in whom the opposition of the heart to vital godliness was most conspicuously manifested. His enjoyment in religion, and particularly his delight in spiritual communion with Christian friends, were almost odious to her. He could with difficulty persuade her to attend a religious meeting; or even to visit friends with him, if she knew that Christians were to be present. On one occasion, after visiting with him at the house of captain S———, a heavenly-minded man, she determined never to go with him again; for his mind was so engrossed with religious topics that she thought herself quite forgotten. He sometimes remonstrated with her mildly; assuring her that if her heart were right with God, the subject of religion would be a source of the highest enjoyment. She was not inclined to credit his assertion; but in the waywardness of her mind, resolved, as she afterwards told a friend, that if her views of religion should be changed, he should never know it.

It was long before she relinquished all hope that what her companion thought was a change in his affections would prove a delusion. She considered murmuring and peevishness to be his besetting sin; and when any unpleasant event occurred, she would wait with eagerness to see an exhibition of his former fretfulness—and it is more than can be said of most professing Christians, that she is believed always to have waited in vain. One sabbath morning she fully expected that the adversary would triumph over him. The new settlers had united about this time in procuring the stated preaching of the gospel, and he was very anxious to be present at an early hour. He went out to his pasture to take an unruly horse, which formerly had caused him many a weary step and filled him with wrath; but though his patience was much tried by the animal, he did not show any ill temper, but was filled with that peace which the sacredness of the day and the delightful services in which he was about to engage, were calculated to inspire.

The opposition of his wife to the spiritual religion he had embraced continued for some years, during which he was

enabled to exemplify its excellence in a life of uniform meekness, kindness, and sympathy in all her trials. He also prayed to God continually for her conversion. Nor did he cry in vain; for when God had tried his servant as long as he saw it to be needful for his discipline and growth in grace, he granted a gracious answer to his supplications, and she became a companion with whom he could hold sweet intercourse on the subject nearest his heart. In September, 1803, she united herself with the church. They then went joyfully "to the house of God," and to the table of the Lord "in company," and were mutual helpers in their spiritual pilgrimage, till together, as the sequel will show, they took their departure for the "rest" which "remaineth for the people of God." After her conversion she declared to a pious friend, that if her husband would have permitted it, it would have been a relief to her mind to have fallen on her knees before him humbly to beg his forgiveness.

Soon after her conversion, he found his first-born son earnestly seeking an interest in Christ; and his tenderest sympathies were excited by the concern of a little daughter, at the age of four years, lest her soul should be lost. With this child, the incidents of whose death will hereafter be mentioned, he spent many sleepless hours, endeavouring to compose her agitated feelings by instilling into her mind a knowledge of that Saviour, who, when upon earth, "took little children into his arms, and blessed them."

He became also very active and useful in visiting the sick and afflicted; instructing those who were inquiring the way of salvation; and animating the desponding Christian.

About the year 1798 he purchased a corn mill, which he regularly attended during the remaining years of his life, as the means of supporting his family. He usually appeared in a miller's dress, unless when attending at public or social worship, and is remembered as the pious miller, probably by all who knew him.

The purchase of this mill was, to many of the friends of the Redeemer, an occasion, at first, of regret, on the ground that his confinement to it must greatly interfere with his usefulness. But they soon saw how Divine Providence, which is never limited in resources, rendered this circumstance the means of good. His mill became a frequent resort of those inquiring the way to Zion, and was doubtless the gate of heaven to many wandering sinners. He was almost always

to be found there, unless absent at some special call of duty, and was always ready to converse on the great concerns of eternity. Few of the children of God entered his mill without receiving some new encouragement to fidelity in the Christian life; few impenitent sinners without being affectionately warned; rarely a child without being instructed in religion; and none without seeing in him a living example of its power.

Many instances might be specified in which individuals were greatly helped in their spiritual course by a visit to this mill. One was the case of Mr. G. V. a man who, like the miller, had cherished from his early years an undoubting confidence in his own external morality for salvation; but who had been led to see that his heart must be renewed, or he must be lost. He found no one who seemed so thoroughly to understand his case as the miller, and often resorted to him for instruction and counsel. By the grace of God he was enabled, at length, to cast himself on Christ for salvation, and became a stedfast pillar in the church.

An eminent and faithful clergyman has also informed the writer, that, when he was brought to see his danger as a sinner, he frequently went from a neighbouring town, three or four miles, over a deep gulf, that he might avail himself of the miller's counsel, and his prayers.

Confined as he was during six days of the week, he most scrupulously reserved the whole of the Lord's day for religious purposes.

At the close of the year 1804, God saw fit to try him by calling him suddenly to part with his eldest daughter, for whose spiritual welfare, at the tender age of four years, he had, as before related, felt so much anxiety. He was not confident of her preparedness for heaven; but he was consoled, while he cast her upon the mercy of his heavenly Father, and felt that he would do all things well. She was a most beloved daughter, in all the bloom of youth. The stroke was most severe. He pleaded with God for her earnestly; but such was the grace and resignation imparted to him, that the moment he perceived her spirit had fled, he said to the weeping friends, that he knew not but he as cheerfully gave her up to God as he received her from his hand. He seemed borne above "the sorrow of the world,"

and soon repeated, with much emotion, the whole of his favourite psalm.

> "Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
> To praise thy name, give thanks, and sing," &c.

Such a state of mind continued, though with an increase of his spiritual joys, until the hour appointed for her burial, when his Christian friends, who came in great numbers to sympathize with him, saw in his placid countenance a glow which betokened more than earthly peace and joy. It was the custom of the plain and affectionate people among whom he resided, after the funeral exercises, to place the coffin on a table a little distance from the house, where all who were present might take a last look at the deceased; after which they would fall back in a circle, while the bereaved relatives approached for the same purpose. Such was the proceeding on this occasion. The devout miller presented himself, with his deeply distressed wife and children beside him, uncovered his head, and with a countenance so serene that its expression will never be obliterated from the minds of many who were present, placed his hand upon the coffin's edge, and in a voice mellowed by the bursting emotions of his heart, began to speak to the sympathizing friends around him of the sweet consolations of religion in such an hour as this.

He appealed to them, that they knew how he loved the child whose remains then lay before him; and how suddenly she had been called into eternity; but assured them, such had been the kindness and mercy of God to him in this affliction, such the spiritual consolations he had received, such the smiles of the Saviour's countenance and the joys of his presence, that that day had been the happiest day of his life; and the sweet peace he had experienced outweighed all the joys of earth.

He proceeded to remind them that they could now do no more for her who was departed than to deposit her remains in the grave. He commended them to that religion which he now found so precious, urging all who knew not its consolations to embrace it without delay, and all who had embraced it to be more holy, and to come up more fully to the enjoyment of the privileges to which their Redeemer invited

them. Thus he proceeded for some minutes to give vent to the feelings of his heart. Many a veteran in sin, who had seldom wept before, united his sympathies with the throbbing bosoms of youth, in witnessing this scene; and hardened unbelievers, as they retired from it, were heard to say, "I thought the religion of those called devout Christians was a delusion. I once called Joseph Beals a hypocrite; but when I saw and heard him to-day, at his daughter's funeral, I knew he had something to support him that I had never experienced."

The manner in which the miller was sustained in this affliction is to be ascribed to no sudden burst of excited feeling, but to special aids of the Holy Spirit, imparted to one who habitually lived near God, and maintained an abiding sense that, though "clouds and darkness are round about God," yet "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." From the time of his conversion, the language of his heart in every trying dispensation seemed to be, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." From that period no murmuring word against the dealings of his Maker toward him is known to have escaped his lips. At one time, when a dear babe was apparently brought near to death, and his wife expressed her fears respecting the result, he told her that, much as it had entwined itself in their affections and engaged their prayers, he felt that he could resign it without reserve to God, to spare it, or take it to himself, according to his pleasure.

The same confidence in God supported him when, nearly six years after the death of his eldest daughter, he was called to bury his second daughter, at the age of twenty-one, who departed in the hope of heaven. Though his soul was not so elevated with the manifestations of the Divine presence as in the former trial, he was composed, and sweetly submissive to the will of God

In all the circumstances of his life, his Christian course was remarkably uniform. No calamity on the one hand, however severe, was suffered greatly to depress his spirits; nor, on the other, did any scene through which he passed greatly elate them. A mild and calm expression usually marked his countenance, indicative of the peace that, by the grace of God, reigned within. The character which he exhibited in the occasional company of Christians, or in the meeting for social worship, he exemplified also in his family

and at his mill. None felt so deeply as his most intimate acquaintance, that his holy life proceeded from an abiding sense of the presence of God, and of his obligations to live entirely for his glory. His wife and children often conversed with deep interest on the probability that God would soon call him away from them. Heaven seemed to be already begun in his heart, and he appeared rather to "desire to depart" and be with his Saviour, where sin would be done away, and he should see him as he is. As he was walking one day with a daughter in the grave-yard, she said to him. "My father, are you always ready to go?" he meekly replied, "The prospect of living here always would be melancholy to me."

In the summer of 1813, the period came when his pantings for heaven were to be realised, and when the prayer of the great Intercessor must be answered concerning him; "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." He was violently attacked with a prevailing fever, which in a few days, on the 20th of July, released him from this body of sin. at the age of sixty-one. In this sickness he was calm, patient, and resigned to the will of God: but in the rapid progress of the disease he found occasion to say, that, though he had a thousand times reminded others that a sick bed is a poor place in which to prepare for death, he then thought it much more unfavourable than he ever did before. But, through abounding grace, he had long been ripening for his departure. It was only for the spirit to quit its tenement of clay, and its abode was in glory. He died suddenly, in a fit of faintness, having had no premonition that death was immediately near, and with no opportunity to add any thing to that best of all evidence of his good estate—a life of devoted piety.

His body was interred in the grave-yard, near his accustomed place of worship, where a rough stone, bearing his name, age, and the date of his death is all that remains of "The Mountain Miller." His death was recorded in the county newspaper, with this expressive and appropriate motto; "His presence animated the Christian, and awed the sinner."

His wife, for whose conversion he so long laboured and prayed, and who was afterwards so long the partner of his spiritual joys, was seized with a fever of the same character

almost at the same time as himself, and died on the second day after his decease: not being informed of his departure, though under the same roof, till their happy spirits greeted each other in the presence of their Redeemer above.

Several traits in the character of the miller are worthy of a distinct consideration.

1. His uniform and consistent piety. It proceeded from a heart regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and guided by his influences. It was founded on the soul-subduing doctrines of the cross. His conversation abounded in a contemplation of the holiness and other perfections of God—the love and mercy of Christ, our sinfulness, the excellence of vital religion, and other kindred topics. No man was more easy of access on religious subjects. If conversation were introduced on subjects of this world, he would soon turn it to the concerns of eternity, and in a manner so natural and familiar, that it rarely struck the mind of any one as abrupt. "Out of the abundance of the heart" his mouth spake, and "the law of kindness" was upon his lips. Upon one occasion, when a man came to his mill angry, because the poor beast that brought him, and which he had been beating unmercifully, had occasioned him delay, "What do you think," said the miller, of this passage, 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness?'" At another time when a number of persons were speaking, with some animation, of their prospect of removing to a distant part of the country, "Well," said he, "I expect to move but once more, and then into eternity!"

2. His meekness. This was perhaps the most distinguishing trait in his character. The expression of his countenance bespoke his communion with God. Perhaps the presence of scarcely any other man would silence so soon a company of the rude and dissolute, not because he attacked them openly, but from the impressions of the reality of religion and of eternal things which his presence awakened. Probably he did not hear an oath in all the latter years of his life; for the most profane revered him. It has been remarked by a very intimate friend, that though from the time of his conversion he was always cheerful, yet he scarcely ever laughed.

3. His abiding sense of the uncertainty of life and the retributions of eternity. His prevailing themes, in his familiar conversation with his friends, in his family, and in the social

circle, were the uncertainty of life, the importance of a preparation for death, and "the glory that shall be revealed" in them that love God. These truths seemed never to be absent from his mind. At the last religious meeting he attended, a few hours before the attack of fever that closed his valuable life, he urged these truths with great seriousness, and prayed with great fervency that they might be felt and practically improved by all. "He abounded," says the friend from whose letter we have quoted, "in speaking of the solemnity of dying and appearing before God in judgment. His conversation would never tire, and it seemed that he was never weary of religious conversation."

4. His usefulness to awakened sinners. The conversation of no private individual was perhaps ever more ardently sought by those inquiring the way of salvation. They thought him able to direct them, for none doubted that he was himself acquainted with the way. They knew he would attend to their requests; for the salvation of souls was the great desire of his heart. Into his kind ear they could unbosom all their sorrows. But deeply as he felt for awakened sinners, he never sought to "heal slightly" the wounds which sin had made. He never told them of their blameless life, or endeavoured to calm their minds while they continued the enemies of God. He considered their view of the enormity of sin, and the nearness of eternity, as feeble when compared with the reality; and urged them to surrender their hearts without delay to Christ, as the only way to obtain enduring and substantial peace. He represented Christ as knocking for admission to their hearts, as standing with open arms ready to receive them: and urged them no longer to resist such love, but to make the surrender of their all to him. When in the social meeting, he rose to say a word for the cause of Zion, or to lead in prayer, those who were anxious for their salvation listened with eagerness. They knew that what he said proceeded from a heart deeply solicitous for their welfare, and felt that his prayers would avail with God.

5. His perseverance in doing good. The benevolent exertions of the present day for the heathen, which he lived to see commenced, had his cordial approbation; but though he longed and prayed for the conversion of the world to God, the sphere of his efforts was mainly confined to the limited circle in which he moved. As an illustration of his

persevering endeavours to do good within that sphere, the following fact is adduced by the writer of the letter to which we have alluded. "Monthly meetings for prayer for the influences of the Holy Spirit, of which he was, if not the first mover, the principal and constant supporter, had been established not very far distant from his dwelling, and continued for a number of years, when nearly all on whom he had depended for their support forsook them; till, at length, if my recollection is correct, only two or three attended. But he was never weary in well doing. His zeal, his resolution, his patience, were not yet exhausted. He still continued his exertions to sustain the meetings, hoping almost against hope, until he saw a little cloud arising, a few drops of mercy begin to fall, and the abundant blessing of the Holy Spirit to descend. The neighbourhood was thinly inhabited; but instead of two or three, the aged and the young crowded to attend the meetings, and the house was filled. He now, with wonder and delight, saw the salvation of the Lord, and was actively engaged in doing all in his power to promote the good work of the Holy Spirit, and in directing anxious inquirers to that gracious Friend of whom they might 'buy wine and milk without money and without price.'"

6. His life of prayer. None had the privilege of uniting with him in this exercise without feeling that he was addressing a God with whom he often held communion. In his private devotions he sought to be unobserved, yet his family were not ignorant of his regularity in this duty, and often well knew the sacred moments when he was pleading for them and others before the throne of his heavenly Father. His regular devotions in the family were fervent. And besides his delight in the social prayer-meeting, he was ever ready to embrace occasions for special prayer. In the interval of public worship, in the warm season of the year, he was frequently observed to retire, with a friend, toward a neighbouring grove. It has since been ascertained that they improved that hour for some years, when no special call of duty interrupted, in visiting a sequestered spot for united prayer, that their own hearts might be replenished with Divine grace; that the children of both families might be converted; that religion might be revived, and the Redeemer's kingdom advanced by the effusion of the Holy Spirit; and particularly while his wife continued

hostile to religion, that God would turn her heart to the love and service of himself.

7. His care for the spiritual welfare of his family. This was especially manifested in the importance he attached to their regular morning and evening devotions. He selected the most favourable hours, and nothing was permitted to interrupt them. He accompanied the reading of the Bible with plain practical suggestions; and he directed their minds, both in his conversation and prayers, to the passing events of Providence, that they might notice the hand of God in them, be grateful for his mercies, submit to his chastisements, and suitably improve all his dispensations.

8. His deportment in the house of God. He was a constant attendant, and always took care to present himself early. His venerable pastor has informed the writer, that, for a long course of years, as he entered the sanctuary, a sight of the countenance of the miller gladdened his heart; for he knew he should have at least one hearer who would be attentive, who would love the truth, and whose prayers would be ascending for the presence and blessing of God. He did not discourage his minister by sleeping. His heavenly deportment seemed to say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee."

9. His temperance. This virtue he practised not merely in regard to strong liquors, but in the use of food; and it doubtless contributed in no small degree to promote the rare assemblage of excellences which were combined in his Christian character—his uniform cheerfulness; his consistency; his readiness to engage in religious exercises; his wakefulness in the house of God; and the perpetual elevation of his religious affections.

The combinations of his character are thus summed up by a respected friend: "He was unusually grave and serious. He was neither a flatterer nor a slanderer; 'not given to wine;' 'not greedy of filthy lucre;' but he appeared almost indifferent to the world. He was sound in the faith. He ruled his children and his household well. His godly example spoke powerfully in favour of the reality and the excellence of religion. Indeed I think I may say that Joseph Beals, by his life, exhibited a more eminent, a more uniform, a more striking example of piety, than any other individual with whom it was ever my privilege to be acquainted."

A similar testimony is given by one who is now a preacher of the gospel, and in a station of much responsibility and usefulness in the Christian church: "With my earliest recollections," he says, "are associated the godly example, the affectionate Christian admonitions, and the ardent prayers of the pious miller. Often have I stood beside him in his mill, and heard the gracious words which fell from his lips for my own benefit and that of others. Often have I hung upon his lips in the social meeting, when he spoke of the blessedness of that salvation to which I was then a stranger; and seen him lead in the devotions, apparently in the attitude of the most intimate communion with God, and even then bringing down spiritual blessings from on high. Often did I accompany him homeward from the social meeting, still breathing the language of Canaan. I was, alas, unrenewed, and at heart still alienated from God; but I knew that I must obtain an interest in Christ, or finally perish; and there was no man whose example and counsel I thought could do so much for my spiritual good, and whose prayers for me I thought would be so efficacious at the throne of grace.

"Since the departure of the miller I have had the happiness to become intimately acquainted with a large circle of Christian friends, in city and country; and I hesitate not to say, that, with the exception of one other departed saint, the savour of whose name 'is as ointment poured forth,' I have never known the individual who, in my view, lived so near to God, and bore so much of the image of his blessed Master as did Joseph Beals."

Reader, the character of the miller is thus presented before you for your own spiritual benefit. Weigh well his history, both before and after his conversion. So ignorant was he of the heinousness of sin in the sight of God, and of the way of salvation through Christ, that he vainly thought his own blameless life and good works would entitle him to heaven. To these delusions he obstinately clung, till God, of his abounding mercy, communicated to him the influences of his Spirit: showing him the purity, spirituality, and obligations of his law; that he who has "offended in one point is guilty of all," in that he is a transgressor, and cannot escape punishment except through pardoning mercy;

showing him that such mercy is offered through the cross of Christ, and inclining him, by repentance and faith, to accept of it. You see what blessed fruits spiritual religion produced in the heart of this humble, but godly man, what abiding peace and joy it afforded him; what love to God and to his fellow-men it wrought in him; what a blessing it made him to his friends and acquaintance, and the church of God; how it supported him in trials, and sustained him in death.

Would you have the sweet consolations of the miller, in life and in death, and partake of his eternal joys, seek religion where he found it. Look at the law of God, till you see its extent and purity, and the terrors of that curse it pronounces against sin. Look at your own heart till you see how, in thought, word, and deed, by sins of omission and commission, you have violated that law in the sight of a holy God. Behold the atoning sacrifice offered for you by our glorious Redeemer on the cross. Hear him say, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Go and prostrate yourself before him. Confess your sins. Tell him you are "a wretch undone." Cast yourself on his mercy. Do this, and your soul shall live. The same Saviour who said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," said also, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Come now, and yield yourself to him. This is the language the pious miller would utter in your ear, could he speak to you from heaven. Come now: let nothing hinder you. Now, while your day of probation yet lasts. Now, while the voice of mercy yet speaks to you. Now, while God is moving on your heart by the silent influences of his Spirit. Now, before you lay aside this tract. Fall on your knees. Let your hard heart break. Give yourself to Him who died for you. "Behold now is the accepted time! behold, now is the day of salvation!"

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THE AFFLICTED MASON.

A NARRATIVE, WRITTEN BY THE CLERGYMAN WHO VISITED HIM.

IN the month of December, 1817, as I was on a visit at the house of a lady in Kent, her daughter, a most amiable and religious lady, requested I would accompany her to visit a man, named Swaizeland, who had met with a serious accident.

I walked with her to a little cottage on Rowley Common, in a room of which a poor young man was lying, under what appeared to me almost the extremity of human suffering. He was a mason, and had fallen headlong, with four others, from a scaffolding about twenty feet high. The others had all escaped unhurt, but he was grievously injured by the fall; both his legs had been broken, and several of his ribs, and his spine had been so greatly injured that from the pit of his stomach to his feet he appeared dead and insensible to pain.

When I saw him, wonderful to tell, he had been a year in this condition: but though his bones had been set, the injury he had suffered in his spine prevented the possibility of his moving to turn in his bed, or of remaining on his side, if placed there by his attendant; so that, being obliged to lie continually on his back, it had in some places, become very sore and painful. He was dependent on the parish for support, and had been placed in this cottage, with an old woman to attend him. When I saw him he was very pale and thin; but he did not complain of bodily pain; the anguish of his body seemed lost in that of his mind.

He had been a very profligate character; and the conviction of his guilt, the fear of God's wrath, and the dread of approaching judgment, seemed to absorb every

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feeling of his heart. He said he felt as if God were holding him over the pit of hell, and that he did not know the moment when he would let him drop. He had been trying to prepare himself to die, and make his peace with God, but he felt wholly unable to do so. He had made many promises and resolutions to lead a different life, if God would raise him up; but he felt again, that he should never rise from his bed, and that these promises would be of no avail.

I endeavoured to explain to him, that while he did not go to the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon, he was setting about the work of making his peace with God in a very false way; that all his resolutions of amendment in his external conduct were in vain, without the aids of Divine grace; that if he were even restored to health, and could put them fully into practice, they would be of no avail to give peace to his conscience, or salvation to his soul. I endeavoured to show him from the Scriptures, that the work which he was vainly labouring to do in his own strength, had been finished for the chief of sinners by Him who died upon the cross.

I endeavoured to illustrate this in various ways: among the rest, I asked him whether, if he owed a debt of a thousand pounds, he would be able, in his present state, to raise the money to pay it.

He replied, of course he could not.

I asked him if he would not be greatly alarmed if he thought his creditor were coming to drag him from his bed, and throw him into prison?

He replied, that he should.

I asked him, if at that moment some rich man were to come in, and tell him he had discharged the debt, it would not relieve his mind from the apprehension of his creditor, and of the prison, and give him consolation and joy.

He replied, it would.

Such, I endeavoured to show him, was his state before God; that the effort to appease the wrath of his offended God, by any resolutions or any righteousness of his own, would be wholly as vain as those of a poor, mutilated, bedridden pauper, to earn money to discharge a debt of a thousand pounds. But I said, the Lord Jesus Christ is this kind, rich Friend, who has paid the mighty debt for those who believe in him, and who could never hope to discharge it themselves. That he has by his righteousness

fulfilled that holy law of God which we have broken; that he has, by his precious death upon the cross, stood in our place, and borne our curse; and that the message which he has commanded his ministers to proclaim to sinners, is a message of free and full pardon; that, instead of vainly attempting to work out a righteousness of their own, they should "look unto Him, and be saved." Therefore I came to him with these "good tidings of great joy;" that, though he had been wicked, and profligate, and vile, yet the gospel declares, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;" that, "though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The poor man listened to these, and many similar truths, with deep anxiety, but I could not perceive that he seemed either fully to understand them, or to derive from them that consolation which they are calculated to give. I kneeled down with him, and prayed that the Holy Spirit would teach him to understand, and to rest upon this hope set before him, and then I bade him farewell.

The next day I visited him, and found him in the same state of mind. I read to him, and endeavoured to set the same hope again before him, as plainly and simply as I could. I prayed with him again, but again left him without any perceptible change in his feelings.

The third day his countenance wore the same mournful appearance, both when I entered and when I left the room.

But, on the fourth morning, when I visited my poor afflicted patient, as soon as I opened the door of his room, a very different scene presented itself to my view. He seemed to have been awaiting my arrival with anxiety: his countenance was brightened with a smile of peace, and hope, and joy; and before I could even ask him how he was, he cried out, as soon as he saw me, "O, sir, now I understand all you have been saying to me: when I was thinking over it this morning, it came into my mind at once—If Jesus has died for us, if he has paid the whole of our debt, then we have not to pay it ourselves—we may depend on him, and rejoice."

"Yes, my friend," said I, "that is, indeed, the glorious truth of the gospel; he has paid it all, and we have not to pay it: we may rest on him, and be at peace."

I then opened the Scriptures, and began to read the fifth

chapter of the epistle to the Romans: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"O yes, sir," said he, "that's true, so we have: now I understand it."

I went on—"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

"O yes, sir," said he, "that's true, we do; we do rejoice, sir, and so we may rejoice, since He has paid our debt, and done all for us."

I went on through a great portion of the chapter, and it was wonderful to see how this poor man, to whom the day before the Bible had been a sealed book, who had listened indeed with attention and anxiety, but without comprehending the truths that were read to him, seemed now to perceive the spiritual import of the whole; and instead of requiring a comment from me, could give me a practical, and a most instructive comment on almost every word I read.

The knowledge of Jesus, as the hope and refuge of the sinner's soul, is, indeed, the key of the Bible. Like the sun arising on a world of darkness, it pours its light on all that was unseen before. It was this that enabled this poor, unlettered man not only to understand, but to comment on the Scripture as he went along.

For about a month after this I visited him, read to him, and conversed and prayed with him, almost every day. I never saw another cloud upon his brow, nor heard another word expressing fear of death or hell pass from his lips. The triumphant passages of the psalms and of the prophets were now the natural expressions of his feelings; and I can truly say, that during all that time I rather derived instruction from seeing the power of the gospel so practically applied to cheer, and enlighten, and support a fellow-sinner under the deep distress of poverty and bodily anguish, than conveyed to him increasing edification, by any thing I could say.

I took one day two young boys, the sons of noblemen, to see him, with the hope of making some impression on their minds. I told him who they were. I mentioned the rank and riches of their families. I asked him, in their presence, whether he would exchange his poverty, his pain, and the prospect of suffering and death that was before

him, for their health and strength, and the titles and riches of their fathers, without that blessed hope which cheered and comforted his heart. He smiled at my question, and as his head and arms were the only parts of his body he could move, he shook his head, and assured them he would not make the exchange, with an emphasis which, in his circumstances, poured more contempt on all that the world could give, compared with the glorious hope of the everlasting gospel, than all the studied eloquence that the pulpit ever could command.

I was then obliged to bid my poor friend farewell, and leave that part of the country for London. Having remained about two months in London, and being about to leave it for Ireland, I was determined to pay him another visit: I went down into Kent, and found him in the same happy frame of mind. He told me, that no doubt or fear concerning the all-sufficiency of his adorable Redeemer had ever crossed his mind; he still continued to go on his way rejoicing, and his bodily sufferings were just as when I had seen him before. I read and prayed with him, and read over several hymns which before had given him particular pleasure; and having stayed with him as long as time permitted, I bade him farewell, thinking that a very few weeks would bring him to the haven of eternal rest.

I must here go back to observe, that before I went to London, he told me in the course of several conversations, the various strugglings of his mind in the efforts he had made, by his various resolutions, to obtain peace of conscience, and satisfy his offended God for sin.

A person who had visited him had told him that he ought to feel very sorry for his sins, and endeavour by sincere contrition to obtain the favour of God, but without pointing him to the sacrifice of Christ, and faith in his blood, as his only hope.

"I often strove, sir," said he, "to feel very sorry, but when I thought I had got myself to be very much grieved for my offences, I found my heart going back, and taking as much pleasure in them as ever. This gentleman, sir," said he, "also advised me to receive the sacrament, as a means of making my peace with God; but I would not do it." An expression which he made use of on this occasion, evinced great ignorance of that sacred ordinance; and I endeavoured to explain to him the nature of it; that it was

given by our Lord to those who believe on him, for a continual remembrance of his great salvation; that he had died for them, and finished all their transgressions; but that, when used as a substitute for Christ and his salvation as if it could atone for our offences, it ceased to be an ordinance of true religion, and was turned, by such a perversion, into an idolatrous superstition.

When I bade him farewell on our last interview, he expressed what pleasure he had lost, after my departure from Kent, in not having any person to read the Bible to him: for the old woman who attended him read so very imperfectly, that he could hardly understand her, and he himself unhappily had never learned to read.

I cheered him, however, with the reflection, that though he could not read he could pray; and that the promise of Christ was not, "He that readeth shall be saved," but, "He that believeth shall be saved." Bidding him farewell, I set out soon after on my journey to Ireland. This was in March, 1818.

In December of that year a friend of mine was about to go to London; and I made it a point with him that he should go down to Kent, and visit the cottage of my poor brother, to inquire whether he had entered into his rest, or that he might cheer and comfort his heart with the communion of one who rejoiced in the same salvation of his Lord. My friend, on going to the cottage, found our poor brother still living—still lying on his back—in the same spot on which I had left him—still rejoicing in his Lord, and drawing water for himself out of the wells of salvation. He had, in the interval from the preceding March, learned his letters, learned to spell, and learned to read his Bible.

Having heard this from my friend on his return to Ireland, and having anxiously inquired every particular on the subject, I thought it was the last account I should ever hear of poor Swaizeland; but in April, 1821, I went to London, and soon after to Kent, to visit my friend. Anxiety to learn about him did not allow me to wait till I had reached the door; I called at a miller's cottage on the heath to ask if he was still alive. It was on Thursday, and I was informed that two days before he had entered into his everlasting rest.

I inquired if the old women was still alive who had attended him, and was informed that she lived in a cottage

just beside the mill: he had dismissed her, and got his sister to attend him.

We went to the old woman's cottage, and I asked her if she had not at one time attended the poor man who was dead on the heath.

"Oh yes, sir," said she.

"What was his character?"

"When I went to him first, sir, he was such an impatient, wicked-tempered man, that it was impossible to live with him; but a gentleman came to read the Bible to him for some days, and after that he became like a child, so that it grieved my heart to leave him."

The old woman did not recognise me, but her testimony is of great value to show that the gospel of Jesus, when simply received into the heart, is not only the power of God unto salvation, but also transforms the vilest character, and turns him, who had before been a servant of Satan, into a son and servant of the living God.

We went on to the cottage where his remains were lying, the door was opened by a woman, the sister who had attended him: she was a widow with five children. I asked her for her brother.

She told me he was dead.

"How did he die?" said I.

"In great peace with God, sir," said she.

"What gave him that peace?" I asked.

"O sir," she said, "he depended on the blood of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"Well," said I, "how can that give peace?"

"O sir," said she, smiling, and expressing herself with joyful confidence, "surely, if a person depends on Jesus, he may die very happy."

"And pray, my friend," said I, "who taught you this?"

"O sir," she replied, "it was my dear brother who is gone."

She then expressed the joy that she felt at having been called to attend him during his lingering illness, and the blessings which his instructions had conveyed to her soul. "I hear," said I, "that he learned to read before he died."

"O yes, sir," she answered, "and to write too! I have several hymns of his writing."

I entreated her to give me one, but she had lent them all

to a gentleman in London. He had learned to write, lying on his back, with a pencil and a slate.

I went to see his remains; I could not have recognised his features; he was worn to a skeleton; his limbs were all contracted and shrivelled to the very bone: but his happy spirit had fled to that place where the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick," to dwell with Him "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."

"Reader, mayst thou obtain like precious faith,
To smile in anguish, and rejoice in death."

Lord, we confess our numerous faults,
How great our guilt has been!
Foolish and vain were all our thoughts
And all our lives were sin.

But O, my soul, for ever praise,
For ever love his name,
Who turns thy feet from dangerous ways
Of folly, sin, and shame.

'Tis not by works of righteousness
Which our own hands have done;
But we are saved by sovereign grace
Abounding through his Son.

'Tis from the mercy of our God
That all our hopes begin;
'Tis by the water and the blood
Our souls are wash'd from sin.

'Tis through the purchase of His death
Who hung upon the tree,
The spirit is sent down to breathe
On such dry bones as we.

Rais'd from the dead we live anew.
And, justified by grace,
We shall appear in glory too,
And see our Father's face.

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MEMOIR

OF

MISS LETITIA STAPLETON

OF COLCHESTER.

MISS LETITIA STAPLETON was the youngest daughter of the late Dr. Stapleton, of Colchester. Having enjoyed superior opportunities of education, her mind was cultivated by the acquisition of useful knowledge and ornamental accomplishments. Parental and pastoral instruction had impressed on her memory the texts and doctrines of the sacred scriptures. These had occasionally made some impressions, but not sufficient to produce any real change of heart and life.

In course of time she began to think her religious opinions were only the prejudices of education; and wishing to think for herself, as it is called, it became an easy matter to think little, if at all, on religious things. Observing the conduct of some professors of evangelical truth, not much adorning the doctrines they professed by their lives and spirit, and, especially, becoming acquainted with some arguments in favour of very different sentiments, she parted with some of the most important articles of the creed in which she had been educated. To profess the truths she had been taught in earlier life appeared, to her superior understanding, mere prejudice and weakness. The proper deity of Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit on the minds of christians, were doctrines given up, as not belonging to a rational system of religion. Her eloquence was employed to dispute against them; though at first (as she afterwards confessed) her mind was filled with a degree of horror at such attempts. Error is progressive. Having taken but one false step out of the way of truth, every additional step removes the wanderer

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further from it. Her next step was to dispute against the inspiration of the scriptures.

When Miss Stapleton was about twelve years of age, she was deprived of her father by death. Afterwards she was called to part with two beloved sisters. The death of the first deeply affected her spirits; shortly after which event, her own health began to decline.

In the spring of 1806, she was advised to try Bristol, and from thence she proceeded to Colchester. All this time she was growing worse, so that it was evident her complaint was very far advanced. However, weak as she was, she determined, if it were possible, to spend the winter at Exeter, still hoping that a milder air might be favourable to her recovery. Accordingly, on the 21st of Septemb r, she left Colchester, and proceeded by slow stages on her journey. At Basingstoke, where she arrived on the 28th of September, she was taken so much worse, as to render it impossible to proceed any further. On the Wednesday night, when she began to feel herself so ill as to have no hope of accomplishing her long journey, the afflicted traveller was extremely depressed, and told her mother, who accompanied her, that she was miserable. Her "strength was weakened in the way" of her earthly journey, and she found herself unprepared for a journey into the world of spirits. Her afflicted parent answered, she was grieved to find her so unhappy, observing that it was religion only that could afford support under such weakness. She replied, "I have no support from religion—I have no hope." Her mother replied she was sorry to hear her say so. This was all the conversation they had at that time, on the subject of religion; for the daughter had entreated her mother, at Colchester, never to speak to her on religion, as their sentiments were so different.

On Thursday morning she was taken with a coldness which she had never felt before. She now thought herself dying, and the agony of her mind was beyond description. She cried out, "O for one more week! -millions for one week' —I shall be another Altamont!" She entreated her mother would pray with her, which she attempted to do, begging that she might be helped to fly to that all-sufficient Saviour, who "came to seek and to save that which was lost." She appeared to find a little relief, and from that time entreated that the bible might be read to her, and particularly such

passages as might be suitable to her case. In such misery of mind as this, it would have been to no purpose to talk to her about actions, when she was examining the motives of her past conduct, and found them awfully defective and wrong. Mere morality was found an insufficient foundation on which to build the hope of happiness. She wanted a pardon; a free pardon of all sin, through the obedience and blood of Christ. Formerly she had talked about habits of thought, feeling, and action, as comprising all religion, to the exclusion of all the distinguishing doctrines of christianity. Now she felt it was mere talk, and nothing else. The foundation on which she had built being weak, the wretched superstructure fell; and it was well for her that it did fall, since it led her, now she felt herself on the brink of eternity to flee to the Rock of ages.

> "But, if the wand'rer her mistake discern,
> Judge her own ways, and sigh for a return;
> Bewilder'd once, must she bewail her loss
> For ever and for ever? No—the Cross:
> There, and there only, though the deist rave,
> There, and there only, is the power to save."*

The greatest part of that day and night was spent in reading to her the bible and Dr. Watts's hymns; and before that awful blessed day was ended, she was enabled to trust in that Redeemer who invites the weary and heavy laden sinner to come to him, that they may find rest to their souls. Here she took refuge by prayer and faith, and here she found that source of consolation which gave her more than a ray of hope in the near prospect of death.

On Thursday night she talked much about her young friends, and most ardently wished for their salvation. She was exceedingly grieved at the recollection of having urged one of them to read a specious Socinian book. When speaking of another, she said, "Tell her, that I spent my little breath in ardent prayer for her; tell her that for all I ridiculed I suffered bitterly; that I loved her to the last, but that after I knew the truth I did not fret for her one moment, for my love was purified; that if I had lived, I might be led astray; 'tis bodily pain, but the sting is taken away. I trust in the Rock of ages! Mother! mother! I am so happy. No, no, God will not leave me to sink at last! And may I trust without presumption?"

* Cowper's "Progress of Error."

Miss Stapleton now found that it was not enough for her to be told that Christ died for us, as his death was a martyrdom for truth, and only beneficial in the way of pious instruction. The atonement was not in her view a mere figurative or Jewish expression, much less was it a destructive doctrine, as she had been taught to consider it. But for this doctrine she had been without one ray of hope to cheer the gloomy vale of death. She now thanked God for the benefit of a religious education, and resorted to those principles which she had forsaken, because she had not till now seen and felt their necessity and worth.

On Friday morning, next day, the writer of this account received a note, requesting him to step to the inn, to attend this afflicted stranger. He was much affected to find a beautiful young lady apparently on the borders of the grave. Her bodily affliction, however, seemed to be the least part of her distressful case. Her mind was unhappy; she felt and confessed herself a ruined sinner; for the joys she experienced the night before were now fled. It appeared in the course of conversation that she was acquainted with the scriptures; so that the office of instruction and encouragement was thereby rendered easier, if it had depended on human efforts. The case appeared to require the encouraging promises of the gospel, which afforded her some measure of present relief.

The medical gentleman who attended her, supposed she could not live more than a week. She was not, however, to leave this earthly scene so soon as was apprehended. It pleased God to spare her longer than the one week which she had so ardently begged; she was spared through ten painful weeks of great bodily weakness, of alternate darkness and light, of discouragement and hope. The enemy of souls was permitted to tempt and harass her spirit in various ways. The bruised reed was not, however, broken. Notwithstanding her great weakness of body, she conversed with uncommon energy and propriety. Being much employed in self-examination, she pursued sin in all its windings, in her conduct and in her heart, till it was detected, confessed, and lamented. Bitterly did she feel its evil and malignity. She had heard of God by the hearing of the ear, but now she saw him by faith; wherefore she abhorred herself, and repented as in dust and ashes. However virtuous or amiable her external conduct might have been, she

acknowledged herself to be a great sinner in the sight of a holy God. "I have had the ten commandments read to me," said she, one day, "and I find I have broken them all." She therefore looked, by prayer and faith, to Him who fulfilled the law in the sinner's stead, and bore its penalty on the cross, saying, "What a comprehensive passage that is,—Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out!" and, "Well, I am resolved, if I perish, I will perish at the feet of Christ."

Those who witnessed her distress, will not think it wise to defer the duty of repentance to the bed of affliction and death, nor will they consider the doctrine of the atonement as affording any encouragement to such dangerous delay. O what bitter complaints did she make against herself! How often did she refuse to be comforted! What she had formerly said against the influences of the Spirit she was now afraid might be the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. Her attendant minister for a while attempted in vain to encourage her agonized mind, by endeavouring to explain the subject. Prayer was found the best means of relief, and frequently did we visit the throne of mercy, where the wounded spirit of our young friend was often helped. At times faith prevailed, and she would say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him." On a friend asking her if she was willing to part with the little hope she had? "No, no," was her reply, "not for life and health, or the whole world." At another time, "To be saved from hell would be an unspeakable mercy, but to have the lowest place in heaven will be too good for me."

One day when a friend, who stood by while she was conversing, intimated his fear lest by her exertion in talking she might feel the effects of it afterwards, looking at him very earnestly, she said, "Never mind if the poor body do suffer; do let me attend to these things while I can. O my soul, my soul!—that must exist for ever in happiness or woe. Eternity! what a word that is! do not prevent me hearing all I can about this all important subject while I am able." On her asking a friend to pray with her, when he inquired if there was any thing in particular which she wished him to pray for, "Yes, ask for me an entire resignation to the will of God, that sin may be rooted out of my heart, and that Christ may be precious to my soul." At another time, "I find that God's sovereignty lies at the

foundation of all religion." Never will the writer forget the distressful emphasis with which he heard her once exclaim, "O that I had never heard any thing of Socinianism!"

Nor did she profess her new views of Divine truth only to those of the same sentiments with herself, who might now surround her dying bed. She made an ingenuous and decided profession of her new faith to some friends of different sentiments. She respected and loved her former friends, who were endeared to her by ties of friendship and obligation, but in matters of such solemn importance, she considered it as her duty to think and believe for herself. To a much loved brother and sister, who were at too great a distance to visit her, she wrote as much as she could of two affectionate letters, and dictated the remainder, in which, as with a dying hand, she entreated them to search the scriptures and to pray, expressing her own conviction of the importance and value of those truths of religion in which they had been educated. To her brother she said, "I am now dying, and I feel that the bible is the best and only support at this awful time. Forget not to pray for the teachings of the Spirit of God, who alone can enlighten your mind, and enable you to understand his word. I would tell you where my hope rests,—on the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ; nor would I part with this hope for all the riches and pleasures of the world."

She lamented that her life had been so uselessly spent, and that she had done so little good; and was particularly solicitous that her death might be improved by her friends, and others, for their spiritual benefit. It was a most painful disappointment at first, that she should be detained at Basingstoke on her journey, as she had very much set her heart on going to Exeter. Afterwards, however, she was led to admire the wisdom and mercy of God, who prevented the accomplishment of her own wishes, and placed her among new friends, whose attentions and endeavours to promote her spiritual peace and welfare she very thankfully acknowledged.

As the time drew nearer when she was to conflict with the last enemy, her mind was supported. Her extreme weakness and sufferings called for much patience, and her strength to bear the will of God was proportioned to her day.

On Lord's day, the 7th of December, while her medical

attendant sat by her, she had a severe spasm, which however did not last long. She then thanked him for all his kind attentions, and said she had tried him very much by her impatience. He replied that in his practice he had seen great numbers, but he never saw one more patient under so much suffering. To this she replied, "Ah, I have no hope but in Christ; if it were not for that, I must sink for ever." In the evening, when her minister visited her, he found her extremely faint, so that she thought she could scarcely bear the sound of a voice in prayer. She requested him to express himself in a low tone. When he had concluded, she said she had scarcely ever before been enabled to attend so well. Never will the writer forget this solemn, but yet blessed scene. It was the last time he saw his dear young friend alive. With what thankfulness and prayerful wishes for his happiness she took her last farewell, like one who was just stepping on the threshold of heaven, leaving him and her other friends for a while behind in the hope of meeting again in glory! She lived, however, some days longer than could have been expected.

On Monday she appeared to be sinking very fast. On Tuesday she repeated these words, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee," praying, "may thy rod and thy staff comfort me." She paused, and said, "but that is for saints." Her mother replied, "For those who come to Christ, as all the promises are in him" "Yea;" she finished the sentence, "and in him, Amen," with great emphasis.

At another interval, between interrupting struggles, she said, "Jesus suffered; he bore the hidings of God's face, for sinners; and if I may say for me, O how shall I shout, Grace! Grace! Grace!"

At another time, when her mother mentioned how much both the justice and mercy of God were glorified in the salvation wrought out by Christ, and that he was made perfect through sufferings, she said, "But I am not perfect through sufferings." It was remarked, that our justification with God was the perfect and complete righteousness of Christ, she said, "Yes, O yes; I fear I have been looking to merit by my patience; but I desire to look only to Christ." At another time, "Let Christ have all the glory;" and again, "My righteousness is as filthy rags."

On Wednesday the spasms in her throat continued with

little intermission. On Thursday morning she had a general struggle, and a difficulty of breathing, which she herself apprehended to be more like death than any of her former feelings. She then repeated those words which had on Tuesday afforded her support. "When thou passest through the waters," finishing the passage with peculiar emphasis. At another time she said, "My hope is in Christ—in Christ crucified—and I would not give up that hope for all the world. What should I do without Christ?' Adding, "I have been trying this morning to think of Christ's sufferings." Some time afterwards she said, "I hoped to bear a testimony for Christ." In the afternoon, she had great struggles; after one of which she said, "Mother, I could bear to hear a hymn." That of Dr. Stennett's was begun: "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," &c.

She made an attempt to sing, though she had not been in the habit of singing before, but could not proceed, both voice and breath failing. She continued in extreme pain the whole of the evening, and for some part of the time her senses seemed to wander. About half an hour before she expired, which event took place about a quarter before seven on Friday morning, the 12th of December, 1806, she said, "O God, restore my senses; support me with everlasting arms, and take me to glory!"

Thus died Miss Letitia Stapleton, aged twenty-two. May every reader of this memoir live and die in the faith of Jesus, the alone and all sufficient Friend and Saviour of sinners of every description that fly to him for refuge! If any professing the sentiments which this young and intelligent lady found on her death-bed to be erroneous and ruinous, should give this account a candid perusal, they are affectionately requested to make a solemn pause—to examine themselves and their opinions, to search the scriptures with humble prayer, and to receive their testimony to the Godhead and atonement of Christ, as the only solid foundation of hope in life and in death.

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MEMOIR

OF

RA-POOR-NEGRO,

A NATIVE AND SLAVE OF MADAGASCAR.

BY EDWARD BAKER, OF MADAGASCAR.

RA-POOR-NEGRO was born and died a slave in the island of Madagascar. His original name was Raben ohaja, by which we shall speak of him, until we come to that period in his history when his latter name was given him.

The natives of Madagascar place greater confidence in those domestic slaves who are born in their master's family, than in those obtained by purchase or war, because the latter class, ever mourning after their native country and original freedom, disregard their master's interests, and are prone to run away whenever they can; whilst the former class, having no home but their master's house, naturally look upon themselves as a part of his family, and are in fact, in conversation, often termed "children." It was hence that Rabenohaja, though rather deficient in activity and intelligence, was appointed to follow and wait upon his master's son, during his attendance at school as a learner, and afterwards when he became a teacher.

There being many slaves of this description daily attending their young masters to school, the missionary brethren, Griffiths and Johns, occupied a room in a house adjoining the chapel for the instruction of all such attendant slaves as chose to learn, and here Rabenohaja became a pupil in the year 1828.

At first he seemed rather dull, and his progress was very slow, but after a few months he began to understand the nature and feel the value of christianity, and his progress in learning became immediately so rapid that he could soon

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read with ease any thing printed in his native language. He was enabled to receive the gospel of Christ like a little child. He felt himself to be a lost sinner, and he found in Jesus Christ a Saviour just suited to him, and he believed on him ; rejoicing that he had died to save sinners, and was able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

While religion thus wonderfully improved his intellectual and moral character, it imparted new vigour to all his actions and habits. He became increasingly active and diligent as a servant. His mind seemed to expand, and his imagination to be enlivened by the new views which christianity gave of the relation in which even he, as one of the human race, stood towards the great Creator and Preserver of the universe. Indeed, it might be truly affirmed of Rabenohaja, that he was not like the same person he formerly was.

There was in his character a union of the utmost humility and self-abasement, with a certain degree of manly sentiment and aspiring hope. He knew that he was among the lowest in the ranks of his own countrymen, of whom the highest were greatly inferior to the white European people; yet he felt that, as a christian, he could equally with the highest know and adore his Creator He was at once meek yet aspiring, abased yet elevated He often used to say, "I am only a poor slave, but nevertheless I trust I love the Lord Jesus."

Although he was a stranger to that refined sensibility which is found among polished society, he possessed a sensibility of infinitely more importance and value, a constant fear of offending his Creator, and a quick perception of the sinfulness of actions. He would never shrink from eating his humble meal of simple rice, or manioc root, from a leaf of the banana tree, or piece of rush matting ; but he shuddered from uniting with his countrymen in their licentious, impious, and cruel practices. He beheld without emotion their half naked persons, wretched houses, and miserable outward condition, for with these he had always been familiar ; but he was horror struck at the contemplation of their utter ignorance, stupid, idolatrous, and ungoverned sensuality. This sensibility was to him a sort of spiritual eye-sight and new created faculty, which warned his soul of whatever was offensive to God, as our outward senses discover to us what is agreeable or repugnant to our bodily appetites.

During part of the years 1829 and 1830, he used to repair to the printing-office very often, and sometimes daily, to read over any tract or portion of the Testament that might happen to be in the press; and afterwards he would assist us of his own accord in any work we might have on hand. So desirous was he to read faster than we could possibly print, that he often desired me to teach him English that he might read such tracts as "The Poor Negro,"* without waiting until they were printed in his own language; but I always dissuaded him from the attempt, thinking it too difficult for him.

About the middle of the year 1830, a very greatly increased attention to christianity was manifested by the natives of Madagascar; greater numbers pressed eagerly to us for instruction than the chapels could hold; and houses of prayer multiplied wonderfully both within and out of our station—the capital. Rabenohaja was among the earliest and most zealous of the "believers," as the christians were termed in derision. He was ever active in teaching some to read; persuading others to attend divine service; and assisting at the prayer-meetings established by the natives among themselves.

His young master had in the mean time been appointed to superintend a school at a village sixty or seventy miles to the west of the mission station; and in September 1830, Rabenohaja was ordered to join him at that village.

On the evening preceding his departure, a special prayer-meeting was held for the purpose of commending him to the Divine guidance and protection. He wept on taking leave, saying, "I am but as an infant in the knowledge of God's word, and I must leave the fountain from whence I have drawn all my little knowledge." However he cheered himself with the hope of being made useful in a new sphere of labour; and, as will be seen in the course of this narrative, God suffered not that pious hope to be frustrated.

He departed, carrying on his back a small bundle; and what, christian reader, do you think were the contents of that bundle? I will enumerate them: first, and most highly prized, was the New Testament; second, various detached portions of the Old Testament; third, catechisms, tracts, hymn books, and spelling books, all in his own native language.

* "The Negro Servant," No. 119, by the late Rev. Legh Richmond.

He felt some anxiety whilst on the road, as he afterwards told me, lest his young master, who was still an idolater, should deal harshly with him on account of his religion. On a previous occasion he had commanded Rabenohaja to worship his charms and idols on pain of the severest punishment, but the poor slave, by pleading the fidelity of his conduct since professing christianity, and expressing his determination to suffer death rather than perform an act of idolatrous worship, escaped without compliance: but now Rabenohaja felt like Jacob, in the prospect of meeting his brother Esau, "afraid and distressed;" and, like Jacob, he prayed that Jehovah would give him favour in the eyes of his superior. And his petition was granted; for his young master was so gratified at his skill in reading, that, on the second day after his arrival, he appointed him to assist in teaching, and ever afterwards treated him with kindness and respect.

It was now that Rabenohaja was placed in a situation which his pious zeal rendered a sphere of extensive usefulness. Whilst engaged in imparting the elements of knowledge to the scholars, he habitually sought to communicate some portion of the life-giving truths of the gospel; and when disengaged, especially in the evenings, he endeavoured by conversation and prayer-meetings to make the adults acquainted with the same eternal truths.

Rabenohaja had long desired to speak with his master on the excellency of christianity, and a favourable opportunity at length occurred. His master was confined to his bed by a severe sickness, and Rabenohaja ventured to reason with him on the folly of trusting in idols and charms, which manifestly availed us nothing either in sickness or health.

The master, humbled by sickness, listened to the admonition of his slave, and confessed that his belief in the idolatry of his country had been shaken many years before by the following singular circumstance. "I was," said the master, "in the court-yard with Radama, the king, and many officers; when suddenly in rushed the keeper of the great national idol, carrying a pole with red velvet at the end of it, the ordinary symbol of the idol. On arriving within the palace yard, he ran round and about like one frantic; and on being asked by the king, he said that the idol made him act in so frantic a manner, which he himself could not avoid. 'It is surprising,' said the king, 'that the god should affect you so powerfully: let me try if it will be the

same with me.' Upon which the king took the pole and walked gravely round the court, without the slightest emotion. He then," continued the master, " turned round to me, and said, ' Perhaps I am too heavy for the god to move; do you try, you are light enough.' Accordingly I took the pole in my hands, and walked about, but without experiencing any ecstasy; and then restored it to the poor keeper, who slunk off, not a little mortified at the result of the king's experiment. Since this affair I have always had a lurking disbelief in the idols."

After this conversation, Rabenohaja was increasingly bold in giving religious instruction to all who were willing to receive it. A few were willing, and all agreed that Rabenohaja, though a slave, was certainly the wisest young man they had ever known. At length an enlarged field of usefulness was opened to him in the following way.

A chieftain of a neighbouring village came to him one day, and said, " You have learned the books, and all the people think you know every thing. Now I come to tell you, that for three years I have been ill of a large abscess in my stomach, and although I have been continually spending my money for charms and medicines to cure it, yet I only get worse and worse; so pray try if you can do any thing for me." Rabenohaja replied, " I have learned from the books that all these diseases which afflict us on earth come originally from the hand of God as a punishment to us, because we have forgotten him, and trusted in charms and idols; and therefore the first thing we learn should be, what will bring us again into friendship with God." " That may be true," rejoined the sick chieftain; " but here am I, on the point of dying by this disease; will God send me any medicine?" " I do not say he will directly," said the slave, " but God, if trusted in, may cause his blessing to follow the means we shall employ, and so a cure may follow." He then promised to employ such means as he had seen used in like cases; only, however, on condition that the chieftain would take off all beads, amulets, or other charms from his wrists, neck, and feet; and remove all idols from his house. These terms being agreed to, he repaired to the chieftain's house, and there commenced the cure by prayer. He then prepared a poultice of manioc root, just as he had often made paste for us (to use his own comparison) in the book-binding. This in two days' time brought the abscess

to a suppuration; and in a fortnight the chieftain was comparatively well. He came to express his gratitude to the slave, and said he wished himself and all his family to begin learning the books, for he was assured the instruction they gave was true and good. The family, consisting of about thirty persons, at once commenced to learn. Their village was about two miles distant, and Rabenohaja went over frequently to teach them, and every Sunday to read the scriptures and pray with them.

The people of the village were amazed. "Is this," said they, "by the sovereign's orders that these adult people, young and old, learn the book in their own houses?" "No," replied the chieftain, "but because I am convinced that the book is good for us all."

When we first heard of this in April 1831, some of the young people could read a little, and the old folks were plodding their way, as fast as they could, in ba, be, bi, &c.

Rabenohaja had been among the first of the natives who expressed a wish to be baptized, and would gladly have joined the first baptisms in May 1831, but his master had not then granted his consent, nor allowed him to spend a fortnight or three weeks in town, as he wished to do on that occasion. Afterwards, however, permission was given, and he immediately repaired to town for that purpose. There needed very little examination before baptizing Rabenohaja, as his conduct had long been, not merely irreproachable, but truly ornamental to his christian profession. He was therefore admitted by the Rev. Mr. Griffiths, to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, on November 5, 1831.

With regard to his new name, it may be remarked, we had never encouraged, but rather discouraged the natives in changing their proper and original names, both to prevent any appearance of affectation in the choice of scripture names, and to avoid the appearance of singularity which the change would occasion in the eyes of the unbelieving multitude. The converts, therefore, pronounced their names immediately before the administration of baptism, no previous inquiry being made. It was then that Rabenohaja first pronounced for his name the singular word, "Ra-poor-negro." Mr. Griffiths was rather surprised, and inquired again, "Ra-poor-negro, do you say?" "Yes," said he, "that is the name I wish to take;" and so he was

forthwith baptized, Ra-poor-negro. The monosyllable, "Ra," it should be observed, has no meaning in itself, bu is merely a prefix, showing the word that follows to be a proper name. The word is therefore simply equivalent to, THE POOR NEGRO.

I afterwards asked him how he came to think of so singular a name. "Oh," said he, "I had seen in your printing-office the tract of The Poor Negro, with a wood-cut representing him with his knees bended, and his eyes lifted up to heaven; and I thought, being a slave like him, there was nothing I so much desired, as to become like him in disposition; and therefore I took his name." I explained to him that the words, Poor Negro, were not a proper name, but pointed out the state and character. "Well," said he, "I wish it may prove a true description of my character, as it certainly is of my condition in life."

Immediately after this, he prepared to return to his master in the village sixty or seventy miles to the westward. He had been twice sick of the endemic fever of Madagascar, which prevails at that distance from the capital: and he entertained some apprehension that a third attack might prove fatal. He even went so far as to say to some of his most intimate believing friends, "I think we shall not see each other's faces again on earth; Jesus will soon fetch me."

He passed the evening prior to his departure at my house. I exhorted him not to entertain any undue apprehensions, but to trust in the providence of God, giving him at the same time medicine to use in case of taking the fever. He expressed repeatedly his total freedom from any fear of the disease, or of death itself; but said it was well to be "always ready." As night advanced, I read a chapter in the New Testament, and he prayed with much fervour and copiousness. On the morrow, after bidding us all an affectionate farewell, he set out on his journey.

A few weeks afterwards, he wrote to me for a new supply of spelling and reading books; and for some weeks longer, we continued to hear of his increased activity and zeal in teaching and exhorting all persons who would listen to him.

After a while, however, the melancholy news suddenly reached us that Ra-poor-negro was dead. An attack of the fever had suddenly terminated his earthly course. Two of his adult scholars came to town expressly to announce to us this sad intelligence. They said he was only ill three

days, and during that period repeatedly exclaimed, "I am going to Jehovah Jesus; Jesus is fetching me, I do not fear." It may be remarked that this expression, "Jehovah Jesus," is one which the natives have of themselves adopted, without any suggestion of ours. I do not think any of the missionary brethren have ever used it, yet on my leaving Madagascar, several of the native christians used as their farewell benediction, "May you be blessed of Jehovah Jesus."

But to return to my narrative.—The last expression Ra-poor-negro used, and that he uttered repeatedly, was, "I do not fear; I do not fear." And I may be allowed to remark, that these brief and simple words, uttered in the hour of death, by the lips of one who had been once a heathen, bear as strong an emphasis as human language can admit. And whence the peculiar emphasis? It arises hence —that the simple and artless minds of the heathen do not attempt to conceal their dread of death. The stoutest-hearted men will, as I have had occasion to observe in Madagascar, when stretched on a death-bed, exclaim with all the feebleness of children, and the anguish of despair, "I die, I die; O mother! O father! I die;" whilst the big tears will trickle down their olive cheeks in abundance. In accordance with such feelings, the natives shun all conversation on death, as most repugnant to their feelings, and account it the height of cruelty to speak of the probability of a sick friend's death, even to his relatives. The infidels of Christendom, indeed, affect to scoff at death, and pretend to face it boldly; but the language of nature, like that I have been describing, will always prove that there is a "bitterness of death," which no mere human strength of mind or heart can overcome. It is an affecting sight to see a heathen die. I think such a sight, if seriously contemplated by the most hardened infidel, would either constrain him to seek an eternal arm to lean upon in the last hour, or it would leave a dagger in his conscience which no mortal efforts would be able to pluck out. O how inestimable, then, is that "truth of God," which can enable a poor slave to say with his last breath, "I do not fear."

The native christians were much affected with this expression, and the more so as Ra-poor-negro was the first of the baptized christians in Madagascar whom the providence of God removed from the present scene of existence.

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NARRATIVE SERIES.

LYDIA STURTEVANT;

OR,

THE FATAL RESOLUTION.

LYDIA STURTEVANT was the name of an amiable young lady of my acquaintance, who died at the age of sixteen. She was the daughter of respectable and pious parents in one of the New-England states. On the cultivation of her mind considerable attention had been bestowed. Buoyant in spirit and beautiful in person, she was the pride of her parents, the ornament of her circle, and the admiration of all who knew her.

To what extent her mind had been imbued with religious truth in childhood, I have not been able fully to learn. It is certain that from her earliest years she had regarded religion with respect, and had entertained the expectation of becoming a christian before she died. It is not known, however, that her conscience was much impressed until the summer of 1824. During the months of July and August of that year her mind was under deep conviction of sin, and she felt that it was unsafe to continue in the neglect of religion any longer. One morning, especially, the first impression as she awoke was, that she must embrace religion then; and that her soul was in imminent danger of being lost if she any longer delayed. She then professed that she saw herself "to be a great sinner, in the hands of a God of justice"—saw that there "was no hope but in Jesus Christ—that He was ready and willing to receive her then, and that delay would probably be fatal to her soul." She deliberated; she reasoned; she called on God; and finally, as she thought, made

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up her mind to the deliberate resolution that she would repent and accept the offer of salvation before the close of that day. This resolution was, as she would fain have quieted herself by believing, the solemn and fixed purpose of her soul; and she felt a degree of satisfaction in the thought that the question of her eternal salvation appeared now so nearly settled. But the day had its cares and its pleasures; business and company filled up its hours; and the night found her as thoughtless, almost, as she had been for months.

The next morning her religious impressions were renewed and deepened. She thought she saw more clearly than before, the danger of her condition, and the necessity of immediate repentance. She reproached herself for violating the resolution of the previous morning, and in agony of soul, better conceived than described, she formed another resolution, as she expressed it, "to begin religion before the close of that day." And with this the anxiety of her mind again subsided. The violated vows of the previous morning gave her some uneasiness; but she had now, as she supposed, formed her resolution so firmly, she was so fixed in her purpose, that the issue could hardly be any longer doubtful; and her anxiety gave way to the soothing reflection that she should soon be a christian. She had now taken, as she imagined, "one step"—had formed a solemn purpose, and had given a pledge to repent that day. She felt, as she expressed it, "committed," and hardly had a doubt as to the accomplishment of her purpose. This day also passed away as before. She did indeed several times during the day think of her resolution, but not with that overwhelming interest which she had felt in the morning.

The next morning her impressions were again renewed, and she again renewed her resolution; and it was dissipated as before; and thus she went on resolving, and breaking her resolutions, until at length her anxiety entirely subsided, and she relapsed into her former state of unconcern. She was not, however

absolutely indifferent: she still expected and still resolved to be a christian; but her resolutions now looked to a more distant period for their accomplishment, and she returned to the cares and pleasures of the world with the same interest as before, forgetting the admonition of the Holy Ghost, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts," Heb. iii. 7, 8.

About this time she went to reside in a neighbouring village, and I did not see her again for about three months, when I was called at an early hour one morning to visit her on the bed of death. Her last sickness was short—of only five days' continuance. So insidious was its progress, that no serious apprehensions were entertained as to its issue until about eight hours before her death; and no anxiety for her salvation up to this hour appears to have occupied her mind. About day-break on the morning of the day she died, she was informed that her symptoms had become alarming, and that her sickness would probably be fatal. The intelligence was awfully surprising. It was an hour of indescribable interest to her soul. A solemn stillness reigned around. It was at the early dawn of day, just about the hour at which she formed, what she emphatically called, "that fatal resolution," a short time before. The opening twilight, the chamber in which she lay, every object around, brought to mind her former resolutions, and in a moment all the horrors of her situation filled her soul. She now deemed herself a sinner, in the hands of God—impenitent, unpardoned—without hope—at the very gate of death—the Saviour slighted, the Spirit grieved, and the judgment, with its tremendous retributions, just before her.

Reader! for a moment suppose her case your own. Time that was given her to prepare for eternity, was gone. Health, strength, flattering hopes were gone. The insidious disease had made such rapid inroads, that her blood was already beginning to stagnate, and her lungs to falter in the work of respiration. Feeble and faint, and racked with pain, just sinking in death, she

must at once obtain the mercy of God, or in a few short hours it would be for ever too late. At one time her distress became so intense, and her energies so exhausted, that she concluded her soul to be lost. That word, LOST, was a living scorpion to her deathless soul. Her whole frame shuddered at the thought. She struggled again for life—raised her haggard eyes, and seemed to summon every effort to pray. Oh what agony did that prayer express! She called for mercy, until her weak frame gave way, and she sunk into a partial swoon. A momentary delirium seemed then to distract her thoughts; she appeared to dream that she was well again, and spoke wildly of her companions, and her employments, and her pleasures. But the next moment a return of reason dissipated the illusion, and forced back upon her the conviction, as she several times affirmed, that she was just sinking to hell.

At this awful thought her soul again summoned strength—again she cried for mercy with an agony too intense for her weak frame, and again she fainted. It was now nearly noon. Most of the morning had been employed either in prayer at her bedside, or in attempting to guide her to the Saviour; but all seemed ineffectual; her strength was now nearly gone, vital action was no longer perceptible at the extremities, the cold death-sweat was gathering on her brow, and dread despair seemed ready to possess her soul. She saw, and we all saw, that the fatal moment was at hand, and her future prospect seemed one of unmingled horror. She shrunk from it. She turned her eye to me, and called on all who stood around her to pray once more to the God of mercy on her behalf.

Turning at one time to her distressed father, as he sat beside her, watching the changes of her countenance, she said, with a look such as parents alone can understand, "O, my dear father, can't you help me?—can't you keep me alive a little longer? Oh! pray for me—pray for me." We all kneeled again at her bedside, and having once more commended her to

God, I tried again to direct her to the Saviour; and was beginning to repeat some promises which I thought appropriate, when she interrupted me, saying with emphasis, "I cannot be pardoned—it is too late—too late." And again alluding to that fatal resolution, she begged of me to charge all the youth of my congregation not to neglect religion as she had done: not to stifle their convictions by a mere resolution to repent. "Warn them, warn them," said she, "by my case"—and again she attempted to pray, and swooned again.

Her voice was now become inarticulate, the dimness of death was settling upon her eyes, which now and then in a frantic stare told of agonies that the tongue could not express. The energies of her soul, however, seemed not in the least abated. The same effort to pray was manifestly still continued, though it was indicated now rather by struggles and expressive looks and groans, than words. She continued thus alternately to struggle and faint, every succeeding effort becoming feebler, until the last convulsive struggle closed the scene, and her spirit took its everlasting flight.

As I retired from the scene of death, I was led to contemplate and write down this brief history of that lovely female, whose state was now unalterably fixed. But a few weeks before she was within the reach of hope, and promise, and gospel influence, a subject of deep and solemn conviction. The Saviour called—the Spirit strove; she listened—deliberated—resolved. But, alas! her resolution fixed on a future period; and although it was but a few hours distant, it afforded time for "the wicked one to catch away that which was sown in her heart." The circumstance which quieted her convictions, and perhaps prevented her repentance, was her resolution that she would repent; or, as she more than once expressed it, "that fatal resolution." Had she then repented truly and scripturally, and embraced salvation as freely offered in the gospel, instead of simply resolving that she would

repent, her death, though in the morning of her days, might have been peaceful and triumphant, and her immortality would have been glorious.

But how was it that a resolution to repent and be come a christian—a resolution so solemnly adopted, and to be executed so soon, could have led to a result so disastrous! The answer is clear. We see in this case the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the dark devices of Satan. Instead of yielding to conviction, and repenting at once, she was quieted by her resolution, until the cares and pleasures of the day had time to come in and take possession of her soul. She thought her resolution was so firmly made and so soon to be accomplished, that she felt in a measure secure, and her anxieties subsided. The resolution that she would repent that day calmed her apprehensions, and thus removed from her mind the most powerful stimulant to do it now. The effect upon her conscience was that of a deceptive and deadly opiate; it lulled to a deceitful slumber, to be broken only by the summons of death. And it should be observed, that Lydia neglected to seek the influences of the Holy Spirit by earnest prayer. She also appears to have thought that she could repent at any time she pleased, and might therefore delay,—a most unfounded opinion which has soothed many souls into perdition.

It is not for us to say, whether or not the cries of Lydia Sturtevant for mercy, in her last moments, were actuated by godly sorrow or by mere remorse; it is not for us to decide on her state in the eternal world; but it is our duty to learn from this painful case the utter folly, the awful guilt, and the dreadful danger of delay.

How many, as we have reason to fear, are going down to the pit under the same delusion! Impenitent reader, is not this your case? Why are you so unconcerned? Is it not that you are purposing to repent hereafter? Would you, could you be content to live one day, one hour, in this unprepared state, if you had not some such opiate to stupify conscience

and perpetuate its slumbers? Suppose it were now revealed, that in a few short hours death would be upon you, would you not be awakened? would you not with great earnestness seek the Lord while he might be found? But what real difference is there between the condition here supposed and your actual condition now? Death is sure to come. Why then, when the fact that you must die ere long is so certain, why do you feel so little solicitude to be prepared? With the tremendous alternative of heaven or hell appended to your decision, what awful delusion holds you in fatal slumbers?—what but this delusive purpose to repent hereafter? Take away this, and the vain hope which hangs upon it, and would you slumber? No more than you would slumber under the trumpet of the last day.

The deceptive influence, then, of this resolution, this mere purpose to repent, can at once be seen. It perpetuates that insensibility which threatens, even now, your soul's eternal ruin. No matter how firmly you may resolve to repent hereafter; the more firmly you resolve, if in your own strength, without believing prayer, the more imminent your danger becomes, for thus conscience will be silenced. No matter how short the period before your resolution is to be accomplished. Though it were merely "to go and bury your father," or "bid them farewell that are at home at your house;" if it admits a single half hour of delay, it involves a hazard for which the wealth of kingdoms would not compensate. It is a wilful delay of repentance, now commanded; it may lead to diverting company or care; it may grieve away the Holy Spirit; it may prove the ruin of your soul. This mere purpose to repent has been long enough peopling the world of perdition. It is one of the most successful temptations of Satan. It is not to be trusted, even for an hour. It is like the pilgrim's "enchanted ground;" he who sleeps there sleeps in the gate of death. If religion will ever have any value, it has that value now. If its sanctions ever will be binding, they

are binding now. If the Most High ever will have a claim to your obedience, he has that claim now. The business of religion is not to be trifled with or delayed. God requires not simply your purposes, or promises, or resolutions, but a cheerful submission of your will to the word, and Spirit, and holy will of God: a cordial acquiescence in the method of salvation through Jesus Christ. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance and remission of sins," Acts v. 31. As a "Prince," he gives repentance, and commands you instantly to repent; while as a "Saviour," he declares himself willing to forgive, "able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Heb. vii. 25. "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him," Acts v. 32. Seek, then, the influence of the Holy Spirit, to melt your hearts to godly sorrow, by the view of Christ crucified, and seek without delay. This is a concern in which no man's word can be taken, even for an hour. Not even the most solemn vow, if it fix only on a future period, can meet that high and holy injunction which "now urges all men every where to repent;" it is the requirement of God, and to delay is to treat him with contempt. O then, by the awful majesty of that God who thus "commands"—by the tremendous decisions of his last tribunal—by the amazing worth of your own soul—and, above all, by the infinite love of Him who died for sinners—REPENT NOW.

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THE IRISH COTTAGER.

IT was a fine evening; and with a mind impressed with the rich bounties of Providence, and the blessed influence of the gospel of peace, I quitted the town, to meet a few humble cottagers, who expected me to speak to them the word of life, and to direct their wandering feet into that path which leads to heaven

The humble peasants who expected me to deliver a message to them in the name of Immanuel, inhabited one of those little islands which are found in some of the large bogs, or mosses, as they are generally called, in Ireland, which are scarcely accessible, except during a few of the summer months. With some reluctance, I quitted the fertile plain, to pick my way through a dreary yielding morass; yet my mind was sweetly soothed, with the hope of making glad the hearts of some of the inhabitants of the barren spot.

I was sauntering on, indulging in a musing strain, when I came up to a small cabin, distant about a quarter of a mile from the rest of the habitations. Being about half an hour earlier than the time appointed for preaching, I entered it, that I might rest a little, and invite the inmates to attend. The cot was small indeed, not occupying a space of more than five yards square. Every thing it contained, however, was neat and in order. The bed, which was the principal piece of furniture, stood opposite the fire, neatly hung with drugget, and covered with a quilt of the same texture, the yarn of which, I imagined, had been spun by the hand of its industrious possessor. A chest, to contain a few articles of dress, and other matters, not in immediate use, stood near the bed: it was rubbed very bright, and appeared as if it was sometimes used as a substitute for a table. There were also three chairs, and two stools: all arranged in their proper places. Against the further wall was placed a small shelf, adorned with some clean earthenware plates, and a

few porringers. Soon after, the sun darted a ray through the little window, which rested upon the shelf and plates, and kindled up a lustre that added to the cheerful appearance of the humble dwelling. The hearth was clean; and altogether a scene of neatness and industry was presented that prepossessed me in favour of the owner, a female of rather an interesting appearance, who seemed to have passed the middle of life. There were evidently some traces of melancholy impressed upon her countenance which showed that she was no stranger to anxiety; yet her eye seemed to indicate a natural cheerfulness. A kind of pleasing surprise was shown by her as I entered her straw and mud-built habitation.

She rose from her spinning wheel; handed me a chair; and with an unaffected freedom, frequently witnessed in an Irish cottager, I was desired to sit down. Before I had time to introduce any subject, the widow (as I soon discovered her to be) said, "I suppose, sir, you are the gentleman who has to preach to us in the Island this evening." I replied, "I am come to offer a word of instruction and consolation from the Bible:" adding, "I hope you attend upon the religious services established in this neighbourhood." "I do, indeed, sir: nor is there any one in the island, who has so much cause to bless God, that his kind providence has sent some of the good people of Bangor, not only to the neighbourhood, but to this forlorn cabin, once the abode of wretchedness and despair." A strong emotion evidently agitated her breast, while she uttered these words, which afterwards appeared to have arisen from a recollection of the circumstances in which she had been found by those messengers of peace to whom she referred. "Then I hope," I continued, "you are one of those lost sheep, which Christ has brought into his fold." She instantly broke out. "Lost,—lost, indeed!—left to perish and to die—neglected by man; and, as I thought, forsaken and hated of God—a prey to anguish and despair! oh, the horrors of that night! —oh, the goodness of that God, who was preparing a way for my deliverance, at the very time I was planning my own destruction!" The tone and manner in which these words were expressed, excited my curiosity, and induced me to ask some further information; conceiving that the circumstances to which she referred with such strong feeling, must possess peculiar interest. She proceeded in substance

as follows: the exact words I cannot pretend to communicate. "The occurrences, sir, which have so deeply impressed my mind, may prove uninteresting to you; at the time, however, that I was exercised with them, they were of the greatest importance to me. The recollection of the sufferings through which I have passed, used to fill me with pain, which caused me to loathe life, and to look with envy upon all around. But now I consider them as so many marks of a kind Providence, that was humbling my proud heart, and preparing me to receive mercy as a wretched sinner." "God," I observed, "who has his ways in the whirlwind, often brings poor sinners, through paths of difficulty and distress, to the foot of the cross." "So, sir, it has happened to me; for my trials, which began in the death of a dear husband, have been the means of drawing me to ONE, who sticketh closer than any brother, and who cannot die. But as you request me, I will, as well as I can, describe the situation in which I was found by those persons who came to teach us in this place.

"During the life of my husband, we occupied a small farm in the island. My heart was indeed oppressed with grief, when, by a burning fever, he was suddenly snatched away from me. For a time I was comparatively indifferent to the state, as it respected worldly prospects, to which I and my fatherless daughters were reduced. When my sorrow for the loss I had sustained, had been a little lessened, I began seriously to think of my situation; but hoped I should be permitted to continue in my little farm as before. In this hope I was encouraged by the good wishes and expectations of all my neighbours. Among these there was one, who I expected, would render me much service in my little affairs; but I soon found he consulted his own interest and not mine. But not to trouble you with an account of my hopes and fears on this subject, which, I observe, received additional force when I looked at the forlorn situation of my two helpless children,—in a short time I was driven from the house and farm; and he, who I expected would prove my friend, and interest himself to induce the landlord to permit me to continue, took possession of them.

"Bereft and lonely, I found shelter in this cabin. For a time I lived, I scarcely know how. One of my daughters went to service, and I was soon obliged to part with the other also. Thus forsaken and alone, I thought of little

else but my sad condition; and soon began to entertain hard thoughts both of God and of man. I supposed none was so destitute as myself: and that my sufferings were more than I could bear, and more than I deserved. As I indulged these evil thoughts, I began to feel hatred to all around me, I shunned their company, and looked upon them with envious feelings. I pored upon my misfortunes, until I became completely miserable: and I began to indulge such feelings towards all my fellow creatures, as induced me to determine to shun their society. I had no conception of the Divine mercy, nor any intention to apply to Christ for peace and salvation. My only refuge appeared to be self-murder! At first I was filled with horror at the thought; but continuing to brood over my friendless and wretched condition, the idea became more and more familiar to my mind. At length I began to think, that, abandoned as I was by the world, and, as I supposed, by my Maker, it was quite reasonable that I should summon up my resolution, and by some desperate act quit the world. At last, roused by despair, I determined upon the dreadful deed. Oh! the bitterness of that awful moment, in which I was resolved to know the worst, and plunge myself into eternity! It was Saturday, it was night, I can never forget it! Its darkness agreed with my feelings, and was dreadful as my poor soul. The wind blew hard—the driving rain came down in torrents—there was thick darkness—a horrid gloom! I sat in that corner, upon a bit of wet straw; streams ran through the thatch, I saw them, but they gave me no concern: I was resolved upon my own destruction. Sometimes I shuddered at the thought of the pain I must endure, and became irresolute; and again I thought of the future punishment to which I should expose myself: but I then felt as if I had a right to do what I pleased, without any reference to that God who had dealt so hardly with me. Still, however, I could not entirely banish the fear of future punishment from my mind. Hour after hour passed on in this dreadful torture, till the morning light began to dawn. I was almost startled at its appearance, (for I always thought I must execute my dreadful purpose under the cover of night,) as if I feared to live another day. I accused myself for want of courage: agony followed, and I dropped into a kind of deep stupor, that cannot be described.

"In this situation I remained, stretched upon my wet-soaked

straw, till Mr. —— and Mr. —— entered my cabin, and found me They were come to hold a religious meeting in the island; and having missed their way, they called to inquire the path to the next houses. They saw me in a wretched condition, and were confounded. I looked upon them like one affrighted, but could not speak. They stood still, evidently not knowing what to conjecture. At length one of them proposed prayer: I neither refused nor consented. They knelt down, and both prayed, one after the other. In their supplications there was such tenderness of feeling, and suitableness to my condition, that my attention was excited, and for a while my bewildered, but now peaceful mind almost concluded I had received an angelic visit. Still I cannot but believe they were sent of God on an errand of mercy, to save me from destruction. They saw that I was deeply afflicted in my mind, and before they left me, exhorted me to pray to that God who alone comforts the distressed; and engaged to call upon me the following sabbath.

"A strange feeling affected both my body and mind, for which I have no name: however, my great terror of soul was gone, the storm had passed over, but there was not a calm. I could scarcely call it hope: and yet it was far unlike the despair that had tortured me through the dark and dismal night. I turned upon my knees, and tried to pray. I had sometimes prayed in my youth; for my father used to summon his family together for devotional exercises; but I had long been a stranger to prayer. I knew not for what I prayed; but I did know that my mind was more composed. I arose and cleaned myself, and my wretched cell. Through the following week I attended to a little work; got some flax, spun a few hanks of yarn, sold them, and procured a little food. I frequently reflected on the visit I had received, and could not help thinking it strange, that those two strangers should come into my cabin just when they did; and that after their visit, I should feel my determination to destroy myself removed. I now see it was a merciful interposition of my good Saviour, who sent them to me, who otherwise might now have been lifting up my eyes in torments; and oh how I longed for the arrival of the coming sabbath, that I might again hear them pray! At length it came: I was up early, had my house clean swept, and put on a good fire. I waited with anxious expectation but in vain, for they came not. I went

out to look across the moss, but nobody could I see. Disappointed, I came into my cabin,—waited a little; but restless and anxious, I went and looked again, and saw nothing, I was much cast down, I could not rest—I concluded they would come no more; that the sight of me, and my wretchedness, had quite disgusted them.

"At length, however, I received a little comfort, from hearing that the persons I expected to call upon me that morning had sent others to the Island to conduct the meeting; and that they would come the next Lord's-day. I spent the week in a state of agitation, between conflicting hopes and fears, sometimes thinking I might yet be happy, at other times concluding I should never know peace. All this time, strange to tell, I never thought of looking for happiness to God and religion.

"On the following sabbath, I rose early, took considerable pains to give to my humble habitation as much of the appearance of comfort as I could, and in due time anxiously waited and earnestly looked for the two strangers, or, as I prefer calling them, friends. About seven o'clock, they entered my cot. The sight of them removed a load from my spirits. They expressed great pleasure at finding me and my habitation more comfortable; and affectionately inquired if I had prayed during their absence, to that God who hears the sighs, and blesses the souls of those who are of a broken and a contrite spirit. The question was new, and somewhat startled me. I replied, that I did not pray much. They spoke to me on the great advantage of prayer, and of the great need that poor sinners have to pray; and before they withdrew, they both joined in prayer. It was indeed a time to be remembered. I thought I never heard anything so good in my life. I could not conceive how it was, that they knew so well how to pray for me, or how it was that they felt so much pity for me. I now, however, am more enlightened, and know that they were taught of the Lord, and that I was a poor ignorant creature, who knew nothing about the things of the Spirit.

"They asked me to go with them to the meeting. I could not refuse, though I knew the neighbours would consider it strange. I went, but looked at no one, I was so overcome with various thoughts and feelings. There was singing, and prayer, and exhortation. The word reached my poor heart. I felt I had sinned against a good and kind

God and deserved the severest punishment. Then, with anguish not to be expressed, I reflected on what must have been my miserable state had I become my own murderer. I could not forbear crying out for mercy, and for salvation from that dreadful hell to which I knew I was exposed."

Here I interrupted her, and observed, "You are indeed a brand plucked from the burning." "Yes, yes," she exclaimed, "a brand saved by the mere mercy of God!" I used to think that God dealt more severely with me than with any other; but now I see that I deserved nothing but banishment from his glorious presence. I then saw that it was his kind hand that prevented me from falling into endless ruin; that the young men who had missed their way, and had called at my house for direction, were sent of God, that I might be rescued from impending destruction. I now read my Bible as with new eyes, and heard the word as if I had never heard it before. The consideration of God giving his Son for my redemption, and the love of Christ in dying for the sins of the world, deeply affected me. My heart was oppressed with a sense of having sinned against so much goodness and love. I most sincerely and earnestly implored forgiveness; and I hope I may say, that God, for the sake of his dear Son, has passed by all my iniquities. Poor sinner as I have been, I am permitted to love Him; and I hope I do above all things strive to serve Him in my poor way. I can never forget the misery from which I have been delivered, nor the great comfort bestowed upon me. I once thought I could never be contented to live in this lonely place; but now, oh thanks to God! I can declare I never was so happy in any situation. This is all God's doing; blessed, for ever blessed, be his dear name!"

The widow was proceeding in strains of humble gratitude, when I had to interrupt her, as the time for preaching was arrived. The conversation proved an important lesson of instruciion to me, and I could not but adore the God of providence and grace, who had so mercifully brought this poor wandering sheep to his fold. My mind was affected, and I found myself prepared to proclaim mercy to perishing sinners, in the name of the Lamb of God. About thirty persons assembled to hear the word. I offered to them free salvation in the name of Jesus. They heard with great attention and seriousness, and I trust received, with believing hearts, the word that makes wise the humble. After the

service was concluded, several approached me with streaming eyes, and expressed their thankfulness and obligations, for my having taken the trouble to come to preach the word of life to creatures so unworthy as they were.

I left the scene with a mind deeply impressed and humbled before God, for having made me the honoured instrument of carrying the news of salvation to perishing sinners. My soul was soothed into a peace corresponding with the stillness of the evening. Pleased with my interview, my soul spontaneously breathed,—

> "Jesus, my Lord, ah, who can trace
> Thy love unchanging, full, and free;
> Or tell the riches of thy grace,
> Thou Brother in adversity!"

"O that men would praise the Lord for all his goodness, and for all his mercy to the children of men!"

Shortly after these occurrences, the writer of the narrative left Ireland and came to England, where he remained for a few years, and then returned again to Ireland. He continues his account as follows:—

While at Bangor I reflected upon various circumstances which had particularly interested me, when a few years ago I was a sojourner here; and I could not but remember the widow of the isle. Upon inquiry, I learned she was dead, that she had quitted the house of clay, having changed it for "one not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." I resolved to revisit the spot, which had been the scene of her misery and the place of her rejoicing, that I might learn some particulars of her death, and inquire after the remnant of her family.

After having been some time in search, I espied a cottage at a distance, which I deemed to be that in which the widow had resided. It was improved in appearance since I last saw it: but still it bore evident marks of being the same. On advancing to it, and making the inquiry, an old man readily answered. "Ay, ay, this is indeed the place where W——s lived; but she is gone—gone, I hope, to a better house, unlike this poor house of clay; to one made without hands, eternal in the heavens!" "Then I hope," said I, "she feared God while she lived." "Ah, sure she did. We all thought her too religious while she lived; but now she is dead, we believe she was in the right." "But what, my old friend is become of her family? are there any of her

children in these parts?" "O yes, her daughter lives in yon little cabin upon the edge of the rampire,* just at the foot of Smyth's Isle." The cabin was indeed a small one; she had not improved her situation by the change: but often have I found in visiting the poor in these districts, that contentment is the inmate of the humblest dwelling.

It had just begun to rain as I got up to the moss-built shed. Without ceremony I lifted the latch of its little door, and inquired if I might take shelter for a short time. "O, sure you may, and welcome; I am very glad you were so near our house, for you might have been sadly wet, before you could have got across the moss." "Yes, I am rather fortunate in being so near; judging from appearances, the shower may be a long one." As I uttered these words, she seemed to start, and turning towards me, gave an anxious and inquisitive look, with a countenance in which was mingled much surprise and solicitude. At length she exclaimed, "O, I think I know that voice! I think I know that voice! Are you one of the ministers who used to come to my dear mother?" I replied, "I am; and having some business in this part of the country, I am come to learn something about your mother, your sister, and you." "Indeed, sir, you are very kind: my sister is gone to America, my mother is dead, and I am left all alone." Here she seemed unable to support herself, and sunk into a chair and wept.

When the tide of feeling had a little subsided, I observed, "I hope your mother departed in possession of that peace which religion affords?" "Indeed, sir, I can have no doubt of my dear mother's happiness. Though she spoke but little after she was taken ill, yet the little she did say, and the constant calmness of her mind, left us no cause to doubt that she enjoyed the peace of God. At this time I lived with my mother, but I had gone from home the morning she was taken ill, intending to stop a few days to do some work I had got, near Newtown. In the evening I was told that my mother was taken poorly; I hastened home, and found her very bad indeed. O, sir, you cannot think what I felt when I saw my dear mother so very ill! I thought, I am about to lose my best, my only friend, and to be left destitute in the world. She told me to be resigned to the will of God, assuring me that He

* A bank of bog thrown up for carts to pass on.

who had taken care of the widow, would not forget the fatherless. O, sir, I thought my heart would have broken I tried to say, 'The will of the Lord be done.' From the first day of her sickness she was very, very bad Some of her religious friends soon came to see and pray with her; and though she could say but little, yet that little was good; and she was so composed and resigned, that we all had a good hope in her death. The disease was so severe as to wear her down soon, and in a few days my dear mother was no more." Here her tears burst out afresh. After pausing, till her feelings were somewhat abated, I said, "Then I trust you have a well-grounded hope, that your mother has entered into that rest which remains for the people of God?" "Indeed, sir, I believe my dear mother's religion was deep and sincere; and I am sure God would not leave any of his sincere followers to perish at the last. Oh how very good God is, in blessing such poor creatures as we are, with that religion which enables us to die in peace!" Here she got up, went to a little shelf, from which she reached her mother's Bible and hymn-book; "In these," said she, "my mother delighted: and here I hope she learned the true way to heaven." "Yes," said I, taking up the Bible, "this, through the blessing of God, can make wise to salvation those who believe in Christ Jesus."

Being satisfied as it respected the happy death of the mother, I inquired, "How is it that you have left the cottage in which your mother lived?" "Why, sir, he who had the lease of it wanted me out. I had to apply to the chief landlord. He insisted upon the leaseholder getting me another house before I left my mother's. Fearing his displeasure, he let me have this poor place; but I am content in it, it is better than I deserve." "But you must feel very much alone here; does any one live with you?" Here she paused—and I added, "Are you married?" "Yes, sir." "Then I hope you have a husband who fears God; and that you live happily together." "Indeed, sir, we do live as happy as poor people can live; and I trust we do serve God in our poor feeble way. My husband was accounted a good quiet youth, and an honest servant. He lived eighteen years at Mrs. ——, and was much respected. He is very fond of reading the Bible, and any pious books we have" Here she introduced a few tracts. "He has

read these over, and over again." And then, as if re collecting something she had forgottten; "But there is another." I was then presented with a few leaves, some of which were torn. On examination, I found they were a portion of Watts's Divine Songs, with a part of a tract attached to them. "This," said she, "I found one day upon a dunghill at Donaghadee. When I came home, my husband asked me if I had brought him anything. I put this into his hand, and he seemed as well pleased as if I had brought him a new coat. He began to read it, and could not be prevailed upon to go to bed till he had read it all through." This was the extent of their library, which I secretly engaged should be enlarged

Supposing it possible I might not be able to see her again, I inquired, "Have you heard any account of your sister, since she left Ireland?" "Yes, we have, sir: she had a sore misfortune; the ship in which she sailed was wrecked on the shores of America. She lost all she had, she could not save even her Bible; even her Bible was lost. She had to wade through mud and water, nine miles, in an almost lost condition: but, after many troubles, God made a way for her; she got into good service, and about eighteen months after, she married a German; from her letters we are led to hope that she and her husband fear God." Here three letters were produced: the first gave an artless, but feeling description of the shipwreck, and her consequent sufferings. In the second she most feelingly noticed the death of her mother, and sympathized most tenderly with her sister in their bereavement. One sentiment I could not but particularly notice. After noticing her loss, and referring to her exposed condition, she observed, "You will need to be doubly careful; for a young person to be left in so lonely a situation as yours, requires great steadiness. You may find it difficult to live without a blot upon your character, or a stain upon your conscience; but God, I hope, will preserve you." The last letter states her marriage, with a favourable description of her husband, and her pleasing prospects for life. Through them all ran a strain of simple piety; which evidently showed that the instructions of her youth had not been lost upon her.

As I was reading the letters, a young man entered. "This is my husband," said the widow's daughter. Then turning to him, she said, "This is one of the ministers who

used to come to my mother's; he has been so good as to come out to inquire about us. I am sure you will think with me, that religion makes people very good and kind or he would have forgotten us long ago." While the husband acknowledged it was very kind indeed, I observed, "As God, in his good providence, has joined you together, I hope you will unite to serve him. He will be your best support in your little trials; and then when life is over you will die in peace, and be raised up again to live in heaven for ever." Both seemed very grateful for my visit, and appeared more deeply impressed with the importance of fearing and obeying God. I proposed prayer. We all kneeled down together; and having commended them to God, and to the word of his grace, I took my leave of these humble cottagers, hoping to meet them at the right hand of God, when time is no more.

The reader, who has observed the several incidents of the preceding narrative, must have been impressed with the reality of a Divine providence, governing those affairs which appear casual or accidental. Who would have supposed that the mere circumstance of the young men, mentioned in the former part of this tract, losing their way, and having to inquire at the cottage of the widow would have led to so important results? We see already that through the grace of God, it has been the means of saving both the body and the soul of the forlorn widow. Its influence has crossed the Atlantic, and is felt in the regions of America—blesses the hearth of a native of Germany, and spreads contentment around the humble walls of the IRISH COTTAGE. May it not yet prove a blessing to thousands still unborn?

Let the servants of God be instant in season and out of season; let them cast their bread upon the waters, it will be seen after many days. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct thy path."

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THE

HAPPY DEATH-BED.

BY THE REV. RICHARD KNILL,

OF ST. PETERSBURGH.

IT is a solemn employment to visit the afflicted and the dying, to enter the sick man's chamber, and see the emaciated countenance; to mark the rapid progress of disease; and to behold the struggle with the last enemy! I say it is a solemn work, and it is well when it softens the heart, and leads the thoughts to God.

I have seen many people in a dying state, but I do not recollect one whose case was more affecting, and edifying, and comforting, than that of Mrs. Turnbull.

She was born in Scotland, and possessed the healthy constitution and vigour of mind which characterize the inhabitants of that country.

Eight years since, she and her daughters were introduced to me by a letter from a young minister who was then preaching with great popularity at Hamburgh. His parting interview with the family was never forgotten. His last words to Mrs. Turnbull were: "Let us see to it that we meet each other in heaven." These words she often mentioned to me, and I am persuaded they made a deep and lasting impression on her mind. From this apparently trivial circumstance, let us learn a profitable lesson. We are often called to part from friends and acquaintances, but we do not know, when we part, that we shall ever meet again. O let us try to drop a word on these occasions, which by the blessing of God, shall be of advantage through life, which shall be a comfort in death, and which shall increase the happiness of eternity.

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I soon discovered that Mrs. Turnbull was very fond of reading, and although she was remarkable for her industry, always busy, she contrived to find time to read many excellent books. In my visits to her house she frequently spoke of the book or tract she had been reading, and the instruction and comfort she had thus derived. I recollect this to be the case particularly with Scott's "Essays," and some American tracts which were sent to her by a friend. She would speak with much animation of a book or of a person whom she admired. But there was always a gloom and reserve on her mind when speaking of herself. She appeared to me like a man ascending a hill with a burden on his back; this burden she could not get rid of. She tried and tried, but it still oppressed her. Like multitudes of others, she felt herself to be a sinner, a great sinner, a ruined sinner, but she had not that experimental view of Christ crucified which brings peace into the soul. O when the sinner sees Christ as the scriptures describe him, "bearing away our transgressions," "suffering, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," and "ever living to make intercession for us," then the burden falls off, every string by which it was bound to him suddenly breaks, and the sinner, feeling the mighty change, goes on his way rejoicing! My reader, this, this is what I wish for you, not the dry, cold legality which will leave you to perish, nor the obscure view of Jesus which will keep you with the "burden" on your back; but that lively faith in the Saviour by which you shall feel that your sins are pardoned, that your soul is saved, that you are justified freely from all things, and that you are brought into the liberty of the children of God. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. viii. 1. This happy experience will take out the sting of death, and make you sing, "O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

This happiness Mrs. Turnbull did experience for several weeks before she died, though I confess I never expected she would be so happy, considering her former gloomy state. Six weeks before her death, one of her pious neighbours came to me by break of day, requesting me to hasten to her house, for the physician said she was dying. The whole night had been spent in dreadful agonies, but by the time we arrived she was much revived I proposed going

to prayer "That is what I want," she replied. Seven of us then kneeled down around her bed, and entreated God on her behalf, not so much that she might be restored, as that her soul might be composed, and that, "being justified by faith, she might have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

While we were thus praying, the Spirit of God seemed to come down upon her with all his consolations. She broke out in the most solemn and affecting manner, and in the following words: "Blessed Jesus! blessed Jesus! thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee: and thou knowest that I have long loved thee, but could never say so until now. I often wished to speak for thee, but my lips were sealed, I could not. O blessed Saviour! I thank thee for opening my lips, that I might speak thy praise before I die." She then paused, and I believe we were all astonished and thankful at this rich grace imparted to her soul: we did not arise from our knees, but when Mrs. T. stopped speaking, we proceeded and praised the Lord for the rich consolation he had granted to our dying friend.

She then broke out a second time, "My God! my Saviour! if it please thee let me speak yet more for thee, let me tell to others what thou hast done for my soul." We repeated that prayer; to which she added: "Now come, Lord Jesus! come quickly." Then followed a solemn silence, and we arose, all bathed in tears, and gazed upon one another with delighted surprise.

As soon as she saw her friends a little composed, she addressed them in rotation as they stood around her bed. To her pious neighbour she said, "Dear friend! keep near to Christ, keep near to Christ, then you will be happy, and I shall meet you in heaven." To her son-in-law: "O my dear son! give yourself to Christ, and give your family to Christ, and live near to Christ, then you will be happy, but remember, you cannot be happy if you neglect this. O give yourself to Christ, and then I shall meet you and your family also in heaven." She then exhorted her daughters, in a most solemn manner, to live near that Saviour whom they loved; and then, turning to her husband, she also exhorted him, with many tears, to "seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near." This scene, which exceeded every thing I had before witnessed, and which I have not power to describe, seemed to exhaust

every one but my dying friend. The relatives retired, and I took my seat near her, when the following conversation took place. "Mrs. Turnbull, God has given you a wonderful manifestation of his love this morning; does it not appear so to you?" "Yes," she replied, "it does. O, sir, this is in answer to many prayers. I have often cried to God to give me grace to speak for him, but I never could do it until now. Often did I wish to speak unto you also, but I could not." Then, alluding to an appointment I had made to see those who might wish to speak to me, she said, "I felt thankful when you gave notice that you would remain at home on Tuesday to receive those who wished to converse with you about their souls. I thought, Now I will go, this is what I want, and I have left my house again and again to come to you, but before I came to"—here she stopped and wept, and seemed overpowered. "I suppose," said I, "you were going to add, that your courage failed?" "Yes," she replied, "that is just it; my courage failed." At the moment she mentioned this, I recollected that she had more than once said to me, "How do the Tuesday visitors come on? Are there many who seem desirous of turning to the Lord?" now the secret came out, her heart was much set upon it, but she always felt diffident. From this I would make one remark. Perhaps, there are many in christian congregations who are desirous of speaking to their pastors about their precious souls, but who like Mrs. T. are prevented by timidity. Is it so? Then I exhort you by all means try to overcome that timidity, and come forward and cheer your minister's heart, by letting him see that religion is with you the chief concern of life.

Soon after this I took my leave, and in the afternoon I called again. Mr. Swan accompanied me. We inquired of the family if she were still alive, and were informed that she was in the same happy frame as when I left her in the morning. On our entering the room she said, "I am going home as fast as I can go. I am going to Jesus, and I am sure he will meet me." These were striking words, wonderful words for a poor sinner to say just on the verge of eternity. O what hope, what peace, what confidence was here! At this time her body was very weak, but her mind was exceedingly clear and vigorous. All her family were present. She was the chief speaker, her heart was full and we considered it a privilege to listen. Among

other things she said, "I have been thinking much of a hymn which my son repeated just before he died." "What son?" we inquired. "My son James, who died at Hamburgh when he had just completed his eighteenth year." She then began to repeat the hymn :—

"I'm not asham'd to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the honour of his word,
The glory of his cross.

Jesus, my God! I know his name,
His name is all my trust;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.

Firm as his throne his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands,
Till the decisive hour.

Then will he own my worthless name
Before his Father's face,
And in the New Jerusalem
Appoint my soul a place."

Now her heaven seemed to be begun, for not one gloomy fear crossed her peaceful breast from that moment during the six weeks after, when her spirit was released from its clay. After listening to her delighted observations, Mr. Swan was requested to pray, and he very naturally asked her if there was any thing in particular for which prayer should be made. "Yes," she replied, "there are two things,—That God may continue to me the use of my reason, and that I may have an easy and a speedy dismission." Her reasons for wishing to retain her senses, as she afterwards mentioned, were very striking. "I am afraid," said she, "if I should be delirious that I might say or do something dishonourable to my christian character;" and her reason for wishing to be speedily released was not less striking, "I wish," said she, "to be with my Saviour." Dear reader! what solemn reflections are these sayings calculated to produce on our minds: "I wish to be with my Saviour." What a happy state of mind! longing to depart, and to be with Christ! "I am afraid of saying or doing any thing dishonourable to religion;"

"O may these thoughts possess my breast,
Where'er I rove, where'er I rest."

God was wonderfully kind to her through he remainder

of her life; for although it was a time of great bodily affliction, yet it was for the edification of all who saw her Now the advantages of her previous reading strikingly appeared: the promises and precepts dwelt upon her tongue, and her experience in this respect should teach us to improve our present privileges, and commit to memory as much of the Bible as we can. We shall want it all another day. In this manner good old Mrs. Graham of New York acted, and she called it "laying up provision for passing over Jordan." We must pass over Jordan; let us be wise, and not neglect the day of our visitation.

The last time I saw Mrs. T. she did not address me in the usual way, but looking at me very earnestly said, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever," Psalm lxxiii. 26. She could then scarcely breathe, and was drawing near the close of life. I said to her, "I see your flesh and your heart are failing, but how happy I am that God is the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever. O! what a mercy it was that you began to seek the Lord before this hour!" At this she raised her eyes to heaven, and said, "To whom can we go but unto Thee? thou hast the words of eternal life."

After this she said but little. For some hours before she expired she was speechless: one of her last sayings to her children was: "See to it that we meet, a whole family in heaven;" and the last intelligible expression which dropped from her lips was a prayer to the Saviour, something like that of dying Stephen: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Thus she departed in peace. Who, when reading this, is not ready to say: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like hers?"

Now, my dear reader, having led you thus far, I would beg you to go with me a step further, and look into eternity See what a privilege it is for a poor sinner such as you are, to have God for the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever. His spirit leaves the body, and where does it go?—

"Angels beckon it away,
And Jesus bids it come."

It is absent from the body, and present with the Lord! As soon as the dying christian gets through the valley of the shadow of death, an abundant entrance is administered unto him into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ. Now he receives the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul; now he realizes the faithfulness of Jesus: "where I am, there shall also my servant be." "I am going to Jesus," said Mrs. Turnbull, "and I am sure he will meet me. Yes, for he promised, 'if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.'"

My friend, is not this a great mercy, and a great privilege? Is this privilege yours? when your flesh and your heart shall fail, have you a Saviour's arm to lean upon? have you a Saviour's merits to trust in? have you a Saviour's righteousness to appear in? These things demand and deserve your immediate attention.

I would ask you to take another look into eternity, and behold what a dreadful day that is to an unpardoned sinner, when he is called into the presence of God. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment;" but all men are not prepared for the judgment. Oh! no; there are multitudes who have never thought on the subject! How dreadful must be the consequences! What will the end be of them who obey not the gospel of God? Oh that every unpardoned sinner who reads this, may recollect the words of God which Mrs. Turnbull quoted, and flee from the wrath to come. With many tears she said to one of her friends: "O seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 6. Remember there is forgiveness with God, that he may be feared, but there will be no mercy for you if you go on in your trespasses. There is salvation in Christ Jesus for you if you seek him, but there is salvation in no other, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts iv. 12; therefore if you slight him, you will surely be lost, for "he that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. Perhaps you may revolt at these words, but they are the true sayings of God, and you will find them true when we meet before the judgment-seat at the last day.

The happy state of Mrs. Turnbull's mind suggests another thought:—What a loud call for thankfulness it is to survivors, when their departed friends give such evidence of a regenerated heart! their removal from this world of sin and suffering ought not for a moment to cause regret. We address the language of Jesus to survivors, "if you loved

me, you would rejoice because I go unto the Father What parent would not wish to leave such an edifying example to his weeping family? what young christian would not wish to see a tender mother or a beloved father finish their course as Mrs. T. finished her's?

Alas! how different it is with many! they live without the fear of God, and they die hardened, or stupid and careless. O! what pangs must such a death inflict on pious relatives! To prevent this, let every man examine himself by the unerring word of God: "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" "and as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name." Now try yourselves by this standard. Have you received Christ? have you believed on his name? If you have received him, then he is precious to you. Is he precious to you? If you truly believe in his name, then his name is all your trust. Is it so? cannot you tell whether you be in the faith or not? cannot you tell whether you have passed from death unto life, or not? Is the difference between the service of Christ and the service of sin so small, that you cannot tell whether you have renounced the one and embraced the other? O! be not deceived! Do not rest satisfied with half measures! You are either in a justified state, or in a state of condemnation. You are in the direct road either to heaven or to hell. Will you not examine yourself and see how matters stand with you? "For there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Therefore, if you are in Christ Jesus, if you are in reality united to him by faith, then his grace will help you to walk in the Spirit, and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; you will have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. The Lord Jesus Christ himself will wipe away all tears from your eyes, and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Amen.

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THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR.

BY A MISSIONARY.

AS I am about to leave my native land to preach the gospel to the heathen, my thoughts have been led back to the means which the Spirit of God employed to call me from the darkness of nature into the glorious light of the gospel of Christ. Those means were connected with the history of one of my young companions, which I shall now record, hoping that the following facts relative to his history and my own will prove both a warning and an encouragement to the reader.

In the spring of 18—, I first became acquainted with the subject of the following narrative. He was then about fifteen years of age, his appearance was pleasing, his mental capacity good, and his conduct was invariably marked with great mildness. He was liked by those who had the slightest acquaintance with him; while those who had opportunities of more intimate fellowship, deemed it at once their privilege and delight. In fact, though he was evidently well read, and his object appeared to be to please and instruct, at the same time he was always ready to receive from the lips of others the least degree of information on any subject.

He was at this period steady in his habits, and his young associates were of a strictly moral order. He had a mother, of whom it might be said, that she was "an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile:" his father died while he was yet very young, leaving him entirely to the superintendence of his excellent mother. It was her constant anxiety to train him up for God: to effect this purpose, she taught him early to reverence the Scriptures, to pray, and to attend the sanctuary of the Most High; nor was this all, she frequently took him into her closet, and prayed with him for his temporal and spiritual well being.

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When he had arrived at his sixteenth year, the prayers and anxious labours of this pious matron appeared to be about to receive a signal recompense. He became deeply impressed with the instructions and addresses of an aged servant of Christ, under whose ministry he had long sat without the least change being effected. His mind seemed powerfully awake to its eternal interests, his conscience awoke from its dreamy slumbers, and refused to be comforted, because there was not peace. He strove to dispossess his mind of those convictions, but in vain; they returned with increased energy, until at length he was led to the throne of grace, and he indulged a hope that he was a true believer in Christ.

Amidst these struggles and convictions, he was called to sustain a heavy loss in the death of his mother. He saw her end; it was peace. He heard her dying testimony, that "none but Jesus, none but Jesus, can do helpless sinners good:" he listened to her dying request, that "he would cast himself upon Christ who would sustain, direct, and save him."

After the death of this excellent woman, he was introduced into a completely new circle of relations; persons who were generous and affable, but quite gay and worldly. Finding, on his first introduction to their circle, that he was the subject of deep mental depression, they at once attributed it to the loss of his mother. Every scheme was therefore devised which they supposed would have a tendency to dissipate the gloom which overspread his mind. They first solicited him to attend private, yet gay parties, at their own house, or the house of a friend: he refused; his conscience would not comply—he felt that such an atmosphere was not favourable to his religious prosperity.

His relatives were continually plying his delicate mind with new schemes: he did not wish to appear obstinate; in an evil hour he consented to make one of a party. The company being assembled, cards were introduced; he was pressed to take a hand; he complied; and thus the first downward step was taken. Conscience was still awake, and remonstrated; but her powers were benumbed as by some deadly opiate. Cards afterwards gave place to music, music to the song, and the dance terminated the gay pleasures of the evening, or rather morning, for it was fast approaching to the break of day when the party dispersed.

He retired to his room, but not to rest; he cast himself upon his bed, he tried to pray, but found no utterance, except in a few agonizing expressions.

Having once given way, and consented to engage in such pursuits, notwithstanding the accusations of his conscience, the difficulty was, how consistently to refuse in future. His waking hours were therefore anxiously employed in devising some ingenious scheme by which, through his own contrivances, he might effect this purpose.

But he neglected, in the midst of his planning, to seek Divine direction by prayer; not feeling his own weakness, but rather trusting in his own heart, and forgetting the declaration of Scripture: "He that trusteth his own heart is a fool; but whoso walketh wisely shall be delivered," Prov. xxviii. 26. Full of confidence in his plan, he descended to the breakfast room, with an assumed air of cheerfulness on his countenance; thus advancing one step further in his evil career, and acting the hypocrite. His smiles encouraged those who had undertaken his mental recovery. He was congratulated on the renewal of his spirits: a visit to the theatre was proposed as the last ingredient in that draught which was to complete his happiness, in a forgetfulness of all past misery. He objected; but his objections were met by a round of good-natured smiles, and a volley of lively ridicule; "Come, come, don't turn methodist, we all must be as you are sometimes; we all have our sad moments, but it won't do to indulge in them; the death of your poor mother is the cause; you will soon get over this. Besides, we expect, from the specimen we had last night of your abilities, that you will be the leader in our amusements of the season." These and similar speeches, completely put to flight the whole scheme of this poor undecided youth.

In the evening they repaired to the theatre, where amid the gay scenes of dissipation, the unhappy youth appeared, for the time, to forget his miseries. His spirits, raised to the highest pitch by various stimulants, made him the centre of his party. He was flattered by the females, and applauded by the male part of his giddy companions.

Oh! that we could but see the secret moments of those who are struggling with the upbraidings of a guilty conscience, striving against the combined influence of light and knowledge: how would the sight teach us that "the

way of transgressors is hard," Prov. xiii. 15; hedged with thorns, Hosea ii. 6.

Such were the moments which were passed by him on his return to that room in which he had spent many a happy and thoughtful hour. How changed; the very furniture seemed to upbraid him, by bringing to his recollection the affectionate solicitations of his departed mother! The Bible was still more terrible; it reminded him of that God from whom he was wandering. He trembled to open and read that volume. Satan triumphed; and, for the first time, he threw himself upon his bed, without reading the Scriptures, and slept the sleep of a guilty sinner.

To relieve himself from the horrors of reflection, this once amiable youth plunged into the gayest pleasures; but even at this period he would not hear the name of God profaned, or the Scriptures irreverently treated, without a passing rebuke. But the mind, like the body, when once addicted to the use of stimulants, requires that the potion should become stronger and stronger, the longer it is indulged in. So it was with him. These last impressions of a religious kind were soon effaced; for he discovered, now too late, that many of his new associates, being youths of dissolute habits, had persuaded themselves into the belief of infidel principles.

At first he shrunk from them with abhorrence; but his guilty practices led him to seek shelter in the same miserable refuge. His wretchedness under the influence of these principles, led him to seek forgetfulness in drunkenness; and he was soon habituated to swear, and profane the sabbath. The way of sin is downhill; and, at length, even these guilty practices cloyed, and left the poor vicious youth nothing but the lower depths of vice to drown the troublous warnings of his conscience—the sins of seduction, adultery, and gambling.

While he was pursuing his course to ruin, through the mercy of God I was preserved from accompanying him in this destructive career. While he was within my power, I remonstrated with him on his improvident and guilty conduct, but in vain, and why?—because I had at first partly accompanied him in his giddy course, and was then without a saving knowledge of Christ.

For some months I heard nothing concerning him, beyond the fact that he was fast hastening on in vice and

misery. I sought for him, but in vain; he avoided me because of his vicious and wretched life.

One sabbath morning I received a note, penned by a strange hand, informing me that this deluded young man was laying in St. Thomas' Hospital, Southwark, in a most distressing condition. I hastened to the scene of woe,—a scene which will never be effaced from my recollection, while busy memory performs its duty.

I found the unhappy youth stretched on his bed, labouring under a complication of disorders, but principally tortured with mental agony. His once calm eye started with awful malignity; his once placid features were distorted with anguish, and his wild exclamations and wanderings pierced me at every sentence.

He was either recounting some recent scene of guilt, or calling upon his vicious companions for aid; but not one was there. "No," I thought as I stood; "no, my once loved friend, the bed of death is not the place where the guilty living come to aid the guiltier dying." Oh! how forcibly did I feel the truth of that passage, "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." I inquired of the nurse, if any one had visited him, or if he had appeared to recognise any one since his admittance; to both inquiries she replied in the negative.

Never, never shall I forget his references to his own awful state. Sometimes he spoke of his beloved parent; then he would exclaim, in the bitterest agony, "I shall die! I must be eternally damned; he that knoweth the will of God, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. I have known, but I have not done." Then, shading his face with his hands, he exclaimed; "O Saviour, thy look of mercy distracts and condemns me!"

I stood by his dying couch. I spoke to him, I pressed his palsied hand, but in vain: at length his countenance appeared more calm, and he appeared to be himself again. He looked around, and recognising me, he shrieked, and exclaimed, "My friend, my friend, oh! have you come to see me die? I am lost, lost for ever! Infidelity may do for the living sinner, but it will not do for the guilty dying. No, no! Oh that I could tell you, tell all, what I now feel; horrors, horrors indescribable!"

In the midst of this distress, I told him he ought to pray, he replied, "I cannot, but perhaps you may be heard.

Will you pray for me?" Ah! my reader, what were my feelings at that moment you may readily conceive. I found that like many more, perhaps like you, I had been deceiving myself. I had used a form of prayer, but my heart had not been engaged in the service. I had never prayed from a sense of my guilt, and need of the blood of Christ to pardon my sins. I wept and faltered out a feeble petition, but it was for myself, for I felt my own state so awful, that I almost forgot my dying friend; he, however, clasped my hand, which reminded me, by its palsied feeling, that the lamp of life was fast fading away. I breathed out a few broken words to the Father of mercies, through the Son of his love; for his soul's welfare: he looked once more, in the most imploring manner; but his speech was gone, his eye grew dim, and ere a few hours had elapsed, he was at the bar of God, where we must all appear

I retired to my room, to seek, for the first time, with anxious solicitude, pardon and peace, through the blood of Christ. At the foot of his cross, my soul, in broken accents, breathed out its desires and prayers to the risen Saviour, and found him faithful to the rich and full promises by which he has invited the weary and heavy laden to him for rest. Through that Divine grace which made me to differ from my former companion, whose early advantages were greater than mine, I trust I have been enabled to live unto Him who died for me: and my soul is impressed with the infinite importance of urging sinners to flee from the wrath to come.

In a few days the remains of this deluded youth were followed to the tomb by myself and another friend, where now, "alike unknowing and unknown," his body rests until the morning of the resurrection; cut off in the prime of life by vicious practices: a warning to the young, of the danger of delay, and the unspeakable folly of sin, and the certain wretchedness it produces.

Reader, let me entreat you, after perusing this brief but melancholy history, to remember this poor young man, and to gain for yourself those instructions and warnings which his history is suited to teach you.

In the commencement of his career, his mind was convinced of the evil of sin; he had some views of his need of Christ as a Saviour, and seemed a very hopeful character.

While under the influence of these convictions, his principles were put severely to the test; he yielded early to the influence of temptations; he neglected prayer; he sinned against light and knowledge; he needed what you must possess at the very outset of the religious life, if you would be happy,—decision; decision for Christ. "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God," Luke ix. 62. Observe the words, "looking back:" there must not be the least hesitation; we must decide with promptness and firmness, without hesitation and wavering.

Remember the progress of his sin. He first neglected the dictates of a tender and informed conscience, then abandoned prayer; and to this was added neglect of the Bible. To quiet an accusing conscience, he fled to the guilty pleasures of a theatre; the theatre led the way to drunkenness, drunkenness to adultery, adultery to gambling, and gambling to both temporal and spiritual destruction; being a complete and convincing proof of the sinner's progress as depicted in the first psalm. Beware of the first approaches of sin, deceptive and treacherous insinuations, for its ways lead down to death.

Never say, as to anything wrong, "This is a little sin, therefore I may commit it with impunity:" small sins pave the way to great ones; the youthful pilferer too often forms the matured thief; the youth who dares to trifle with truth, too often becomes the confirmed violater of truth and honesty. There are no little sins with God. What many call "a small sin," will damn the soul, if it is not pardoned. If a man should keep the whole law, and offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Remember, that though your guilty companions may now boast of their friendship, they will doubtless desert you in the extremity of death; and that, what is still more awful, if you have forgotten, neglected, and despised God in health, when your fear cometh, and in the agonies of death, he may laugh at your calamity.

You will see also in this brief history, that we all have within us the seeds of the worst vices, for this young man was, at the outset, not practically vicious, but calm and restrained; not violent, but placid; in fact, what would be called an amiable youth, and yet see what he was when placed in circumstances adapted to call forth the evils of

the heart! You, my reader, have by nature the same awful dispositions; you need the grace of Christ to transform and keep you, the Spirit of God to enlighten and sanctify; the blood of Christ to cleanse, and make you meet for glory.

Remember this poor youth in the end of his career. It was dreadful beyond conception; dying without hope, without Christ, in prospect of eternal misery. Ah! reader, if you could have seen his look, if you could have heard his cry, you would, methinks, have been alarmed and instructed. Flee, I beseech you, now, without delay, to the cross of Christ, where only you can find peace and pardon through the blood of Christ: go, cast yourself at his feet; and, with uplifted voice, but broken heart, say—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm:
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength, and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all."

Reader, receive the solemn admonitions of Scripture, which are enforced by the facts that have been related.

"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices," Prov. i. 24—31.

"He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy," Prov. xxix. 1.

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MY FATHER'S PRAYER.

THE hour that gave birth to James ——, witnessed the departure of his mother. His father had been attacked with a violent fever, and lay at that moment apparently in the agonies of death. The sound of the words, "Her spirit is departing," heard by the husband, roused him; and in the most imploring manner he begged to be carried to her bedside, that he might see her once more. The request was instantly complied with. She waved her hand in a last adieu, and her spirit took its upward flight.

The life of the father was spared; and as soon as the powers of his mind returned, he took the surviving babe into his trembling arms, and in solemn prayer consecrated him to God. As his infant powers opened, he felt the obligation to regard, first of all, the welfare of his soul, and laboured faithfully to instil into his young mind the great truths of religion.

He had thus made his infant son the object of his care for nine years, when he was attacked with a lingering disease that forewarned him the child must soon be left an orphan, and he had no resource but to cast him, by faith, upon the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ. Long had he taught him the sinfulness of his heart, and told him of the love of God manifested in the gift of his Son, and guided his infant lips in prayer; and just before he died, he called him to his bedside, put his hand on his head, and with eyes and heart raised to heaven, again committed him to the protection and guidance of the Father of the fatherless. The child lifted his eyes to those of his dying father, saw them filled with tears, and heard his faultering voice committing his soul to God through Jesus Christ, and that father's prayer made a deep and lasting impression on his heart.

The guardianship of James was committed to a near relative, who carefully attended to his property, and gave him

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the best advantages of education in a neighbouring school. Here he unhappily attracted the notice of one of the assistant teachers of the institution, a man of fascinating manners, and an accomplished scholar, whose principles and conversation exerted over him a most controlling influence. This gentleman had travelled extensively, seen much of the world, and acquired a rich fund of entertaining information and anecdote. He had visited America; was a warm republican; and gave such glowing descriptions of American scenery and manners, and the happy results of freedom from European tyranny as captivated the mind of his young pupil, and induced him to form the fixed resolution, that, when of age, he would hasten to that land, and become one of her free citizens.

Having thus gained the ear and the heart of James, this teacher took him into his own room, made him an intimate companion, and began gradually to poison his mind with the most deep-rooted and malignant principles of infidelity. Perceiving that he had firmly embraced the principles of religion, and fearing the consequences of an open attack, he at first raised no objection against christianity as a revelation from God; but began by attacking such doctrines of the gospel as he could present in an odious light; particularly the purpose of God eternally to punish any of his offending creatures. He pointed to the goodness of God in the works of nature, and argued that such a doctrine was the foulest stain upon the Most High. Then he proceeded to intimate that the Bible was a forgery, and christianity a delusion: and, at length, to pour upon his mind the multiplied and specious objections and cavillings of infidel writers. It is not surprising that the unsuspecting youth fell a prey to the artifices of this arch-deceiver, who not only claimed to be his sincere friend, but by his fascinating manners, his false premises and erroneous conclusions, was prepared to deceive those far better fortified than his present victim.

The guardian of James was kept in profound ignorance of this change of his principles; and, at length, received him with open arms into his family, and placed him in an important and lucrative situation in his own employ.

James entered upon his new duties with high spirits, and resolved to do his utmost to give satisfaction to his guardian, who loved him as his own son; but with such principles

secretly cherished, he was ill prepared to withstand the temptations of life. For twelve months he kept aloof from vicious society, with the exception that once, in the absence of his protector, he rambled to the theatre. He was captivated with the performance, and longed for the time when he could indulge his favourite passion without restraint. Soon after this he left the house of his guardian; and in his new situation, destitute of religious principle, surrounded with the pleasures of a voluptuous city, and many gay, thoughtless companions, though during the day he attended to the duties of his office, yet at night he was often at the theatre, ensnared by the most vicious of society, and from the theatre to the tavern, and a participation of the flowing bowl and the merry song, the transition was easy and natural. For some time he kept up a decent appearance, and regularly attended to his business; but being an infidel at heart, he forsook the house of God, and devoted the sabbath to sinful amusements and indulgences. After the first transgression of this nature, conscience gnawed his heart like a viper, and set before him in fearful array the warnings and admonitions of his departed father, the remembrance of whose last prayer stung him to the heart. His frequent absence from the house of God excited the suspicions of his affectionate guardian, which were, at length, confirmed by his meeting him reeling home from a midnight debauch. He saw that he was already on the verge of ruin, warned him of his danger, and extorted promises of amendment; but, alas! his religious principles were gone; and he sunk deeper and deeper in sin and folly, till, becoming of age, he made preparation to fulfil his favourite project of exchanging his native land for America. His infidel companions expressed their grief in the prospect of his leaving them, and showed their sincerity by joining him in a scene of mirth and dissipation previous to the parting hour.

Before leaving his native land, a pious lady said to him, "Young man, I am sorry to see that you are in all things the reverse of your pious father; but, mark it, his prayers in your behalf will yet be answered" This was a dagger to his soul; and though he persisted in his infidelity, often did this expression, like a warning voice, call upon him to return from the road of death.

He landed in America, which had been viewed by him as a paradise upon earth; but it proved no paradise to him.

He became a leader among infidels, an open scoffer and blasphemer. Having been seduced himself, he became a seducer of others; and that he might be enabled successfully to contend with the unwary, he carefully read all the infidel writings he could procure.

But conscience, like an ever-gnawing worm, incessantly annoyed him. After being warmly engaged in casting contempt upon the religion of Christ, it would arise before his mind in all the majesty of truth, and thunder the threatenings of a holy God in his ears. "Perhaps this religion may be true; perhaps Christ is the Son of God; perhaps he will yet judge the world; and if so, what will become of thee, proud blasphemer? Wilt thou not tremble then, and call upon rocks and mountains to fall upon thee, and hide thee from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne?"

These thoughts often created painful misgivings; but instead of investigating this most important of all subjects, he closed his eyes against the light; and to strengthen himself in his ruinous system, when he returned to society he would again urge his objections, and endeavour to make proselytes to his soul-destroying scheme.

He appeared nearly gone beyond all hope of recovery, when a deadly disease seized upon him, and he was brought to the verge of the grave. Alas! he had no hope. All within was darkness and despair; and he felt that he was about to launch upon a boundless ocean, and without pilot or guide. But his life was spared.

He had spent five years in America, in the neglect of all the means of grace, and living without God in the world, when, on a summer evening, he wandered from his dwelling, and amused himself by following the windings of one of those narrow paths which are so common in the western wilderness. He seated himself beneath the foliage of a large oak; and in this lone spot, secluded from all eyes but that of the Omnipresent, he was led imperceptibly to a new and unusual train of reflections. His earthly prospects had been blasted; his infidel friends had stripped him of his patrimony; he was now a wanderer in a foreign land, and pennyless among strangers.

These sad reverses first occupied his mind. The next inquiry was their cause. This led him to a review of his past life; the instructions and exhortations of his pious father; his warm expressions of gratitude to God for the

gift of his Son; and now the dying scene was present to his view. He thought he could almost hear the fervent supplications of the man of God; and feel his hand upon his head, when he committed him to the protection of the Father of mercies. He burst into tears; his head sunk upon his bosom, and in agony he clasped his hands. His boyish years passed in review before him; the suggestions, the artifices, and bold assertions of his false friend caused the bitter groan to burst from his heart; for to this he could trace the sins of his subsequent life, his daring rebellion, his avowed opposition to the cause of Christ, and his horrid blasphemies.

Alas! thought he, it is no wonder I am thus circumstanced, for every step I have taken in life has been wrong. As I have grown in years, I have grown in sin; and my astonishment is, that such a monster should be permitted to live upon the earth. Pursuing these painful reflections, he was led to think upon God; that awful Being against whom he had rebelled; whose presence he felt then pervaded him, and whose eye then scanned all his secret musings. He had such a view of the awful majesty and inflexible justice of Jehovah, as filled him with fearfulness and trembling.

"And this, O my soul," said he, "is the tremendous God against whom thou hast rebelled; this is the awful Being whose holy law thou hast violated, and whose beloved Son thou hast contemned. Oh! I cannot stand before this dreadful God, who is now here present with me, and who surely has given me this fearful view of himself as the prelude to my eternal destruction. Down, down, guilty wretch —fall down before this terrible God!"

Instantly he prostrated himself upon the earth; but such was his sense of sin and shame, that he was silent. He could not open his mouth, but the language of his heart was, Guilty, guilty, guilty! There he lay for some time, but not a word could he speak. He rose, and in bitter anguish paced to and fro, while the awful majesty of God was exhibited before him, and the aggravation of his sins caused his heart, as it were, to bleed within him. He fell upon his knees, he smote upon his breast, and in bitter agony cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The tears now fell freely, a faint ray of hope that mercy might yet be sought and pardon found, sprang up in his heart; on rising from his knees, he covenanted to live and die seeking the pardon

of his manifold transgressions; and while he felt grateful that he had not long ago been sent to hell, his heart whispered, All this is in answer to my father's prayer.

With a bleeding heart he returned to his home; and there again fell upon his knees before the Most High, and implored his pardoning mercy. He resolved to abstain from all external sin, and to live in the discharge of every duty; and on this ground he vainly hoped to obtain pardon. The next sabbath his neighbours were astonished to see him in the house of God, and still more so when he retired without making one ill-natured remark on what had been said. True to his resolution, three times a day he was upon his knees before God, and he was in a good degree enabled to refrain from external sin; but alas! his case appeared more and more desperate; for every day he made fresh discoveries of the sinfulness of his thoughts, which he found proceeded from a corrupt fountain. Still he persevered; but the longer, the worse he became in his own estimation; and the clearer his views of the inflexible justice of Jehovah became, the more he discovered his own exposure to his righteous indignation. Such was his sense of guilt, that sleep forsook him; and when those around him were slumbering, he, in some secret and retired grove, lay prostrate on the cold ground, crying for mercy. Sometimes, when about to partake of the bounties of God's providence, he had such views of his unworthiness, that he was compelled to leave the table, feeling that such a sinner deserved not to breathe the air and tread upon the earth, much less to partake of God's rich blessings.

The arrows of Jehovah's wrath were drinking up his spirits, and all his efforts to obtain pardon and acceptance had proved abortive. Almost in a state of despair, his bitter cry was, "O God, is there no hope for a wretch like me! and must I sink beneath thy wrath for ever! Justice says it is right, but appalling thought! to be banished from God, and shut up in eternal despair!"

In this sad frame, he called to his recollection a precious treasure he had preserved from the wreck of all his earthly fortune. Ah! said he, to my mother's Bible I will apply; here I may obtain relief from my bitter anguish. He opened that blessed book, and read: "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset

us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," Heb. xii. 1, 2.

These words melted his heart; and this was his language: "Are the eyes of saints and angels fixed upon those who are running for the christian crown? Do these holy beings behold me in a state of deep despondency, labouring under a load of guilt which presses me to the earth? And does my sainted father behold me, thus self-condemned and longing after an interest in the pardoning love of God? Above all, does the Holy One himself behold me thus prostrate before him, stripped of all my self-dependence and all my false pleas, and sensible that, without his interposition, I am lost; and oh! will he spurn me from his feet, and cast me off for ever? And shall I not be permitted to cast one look to Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of faith?"

Again he cast his eye upon the sacred page, and read, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." These words were to his wounded heart as precious balm. "And is it possible," said he, "that God, in love, has thus chastened me? And have I, poor guilty wanderer, been thus scourged previous to my being numbered among the sons of God? Is it possible that I shall be thus privileged, who have been the chief of sinners, who have deserved the lowest hell? Shall I yet be permitted to cry, 'Abba, Father?'"

Then it was that he experienced what words cannot describe, and none but those who have received the white stone, and in it a new name written, can comprehend, Rev. ii. 17. He heard no sound; he saw no sight with his natural eye; no miracle was performed on his physical system; he received no new faculty; but, to express it as near as we can, the eye of his mind was steadily fixed upon God, who caused his goodness to pass before him, proclaiming his name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin."

This view filled his mind with reverence, awe, and delight. Now, for the first time, he saw the beauty of holiness, and that in that consists the chief excellency of God; now he saw that his sins reflected on the character of Jehovah; now he beheld the fitness and excellency of the plan of salvation, and Jesus appeared to him the "chief among

ten thousand, and altogether lovely;" for he "beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." With holy joy, he cast himself at his feet; and with deep contrition for his past offences, surrendered to him the throne of his heart, and swore allegiance to him for ever.

And oh! what an hour was that to his soul! For first came pardon; then peace, and the love of God shed abroad in his heart; and joy in the Holy Ghost, thrilling through all the faculties of the soul, and refreshing it with the waters of those rivers of pleasure that flow at God's right hand. Now, for the first time in his life, was James a happy man; and now, for the first time, did he reflect with sincere pleasure and holy thankfulness on that scene when his father commended him to the Father of the fatherless. And now, on his bended knees, he returned most grateful thanks to the God of all grace for his unspeakable goodness.

Years have passed away, and James is now a faithful minister of the gospel, publishing its glad tidings to dying sinners. Often has he been heard to bless God for "My father's prayer;" and scarcely less often for "My mother's Bible," which he has bound to his heart as a rich treasure, and which he expects, when he leaves the walls of Zion, to transmit to his descendants as a light to their path and a lamp to their feet; as their guide and counsellor from life to life, and from world to world.

To the truth of every part of the above narrative, he has given his solemn testimony; and at his desire it is published, that God may be glorified, and that you, reader, moved by his goodness and mercy, may make no delay in embracing that Saviour whose service on earth is blessed, and whose praise must fill all holy hearts for ever.

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A SHORT ACCOUNT OF
CATHERINE PHILLIPS.

In a Letter to a Friend.

MY DEAR FRIEND.—According to your wish, I send you an account of the state of mind in which I first found Catherine Phillips, and of the conversations and reading, which, through the mercy of God, were made the means of removing her fear of death and judgment, and of giving her an assurance of the pardon of her sins. I cannot promise to give you her exact words, nor those which were addressed to her, but you may rely on the strict truth of the sentiments ascribed to her, and the tenour of the replies. Some time has passed away since she entered into rest, but she, being dead, may yet speak to the hearts of some, who are still "without hope and without God in the world."

Being on a visit at C—, for a few months, I was met one day by an acquaintance, whose benevolence led her to look much into the wants of the poor; she told me, that she was on her way to take some wine to a woman who was very ill and dejected, and that she hoped a little nourishing food and wine might remove her gloom. I have seen her twice, she continued, and tried to comfort her, but it is all in vain. I asked what made her so miserable, and was told that she feared she was dying, and felt sure that her soul would be cast into everlasting punishment. On expressing commiseration for the poor sufferer, my friend asked me to accompany her to the house, saying, "It is providential that I came this way and met you, for I feel myself quite unequal to speak to her: our excellent clergyman is gone away for a few weeks to recruit his health; and she will like you because you come from Ireland; her father was an Irishman." I consented to go with her, and

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endeavoured to lift up my heart to God, that I might be directed to speak to this poor woman, in such a manner as would comfort, without misleading her; and that my visit might be acceptable to her, not because I belonged to the land which she loved, but because I pointed out to her the way into that better country, where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away," Rev. xxi. 4.

We went through a small kitchen, mounted a narrow staircase, and found the poor woman in bed, and breathing with difficulty. She appeared about five-and-thirty, her hands were very thin, and her face very pale; but there was a look of anxiety and trouble, more evident even than that of illness, which gave her countenance almost the appearance of ill temper, though otherwise her features were interesting.

Having made some inquiries about her state of health, my friend said, "I have brought an Irish lady to see you, as I cannot remain longer with you at present: if you wish for a little more jelly, send to my house for it; and now pray keep up your spirits, and do not give way to melancholy thoughts?"

"Are you from Ireland, ma'am?" said Catherine Phillips, when we were alone. I told her I was, and that I had come to see her, hearing that she was of an Irish family.

"It is very good of you," she said, "to come and visit a creature like me. I feel a drawing to Irish people, for the sake of my dear father: he is dead and gone, ma'am, and I shall never see him more." As she said this, tears gushed from her eyes.

I replied, It is a great grief to lose those who have been tender and kind to us from infancy, and every one who has right feelings, must deeply deplore the death of a beloved parent; but we must remember that every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ who is removed from this passing world, will be raised from the dead, and again united to those dear friends who, like them, have sought pardon and peace through the Saviour's atoning blood. I trust both you and your father are amongst this number; and if so, you may believe that he is "not lost, but gone before."

"You are very good, I'm sure, madam," she replied; "but

it does me no good to hear any thing about God or the Saviour; I am always trying to put such thoughts out of my head; I have no ease any other way."

I grieve to hear you say so; for whether your trouble is connected with the trials of this world, or fear of punishment in the next, there is no sure support under either but what is found in trusting in the lovingkindness of the Lord.

"Trials in this world!" she repeated with emphasis. "No, ma'am, I can bear my cough, and the pain in my side and head well enough, and I could lie awake night after night with pleasure, if I could forget where I am going; but I deserve it all, and I can't forget it."

From what you say, I replied, I fear you have no confidence in the Saviour's promise, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." You seem just one of those whom He mercifully invites in these words; and I dare say you have heard another promise to the same purpose, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

"Oh yes," she said, "I have heard these promises over and over again: my blessed father went to glory upon them, and closed his eyes on this world, saying, 'No wise cast out!' But he was very different from me; he deserved to go to heaven, for he loved God, and he prayed to God, and he often advised me to do the same; but I thought there was time enough for religion when people were old, so I never mended my ways: and now when it is too late, I find my mistake." The writhing of her features during this conversation, pained me nearly as much as the words she uttered; and as much to relieve my own feelings, as for her sake, I exclaimed, May God comfort you! "Oh no," she cried, "there is no comfort for me in God." She then paused, and said with a solemn voice, "You do not know who you are speaking to, madam; if you knew what a life I have led, if you knew one quarter of my wickedness, you would not come near me, or desire me to put my trust in God."

I replied that I was certainly wholly ignorant of her former life, and that I lamented to hear that she had lived in such an evil course; but that God, who knew best how far his pardoning mercy could reach, had promised, saying, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous

man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 7. Surely, I said, this ought to encourage you to turn *to* the Lord, instead of turning *away* from him. He is in earnest when he gives you this promise ; therefore believe his word, and pray to him to forgive all your transgressions, for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ.

" Oh ! I wish I could ! I wish I dared do it. Oh no ! it is too late ; I can't forsake my ways or my thoughts ; it is they that are forsaking me. No thanks to me now for leaving off some of my sins, when I can commit them no longer. No thanks to me for not despising my betters, when a hunted hare is far happier than I am. No thanks to me for not setting my heart on fine clothes and good living, when I have no health to enjoy either. I am just chained down, ma'am ; but that will not do for God."

Do you think, said I, you really love your sins so well, that if you were to recover, you would gladly return to them ?

" Indeed perhaps I might," she replied ; " for I had warnings before, but the effect did not last. I lost a sweet child of nine years old, and the day she was buried I was nearly distracted, and I shut myself up in the stable, and prayed to God, and promised him that I would keep his commandments, and attend church and the sacrament, if he would forgive all my sins, and leave me my other children. For awhile I kept my pride and my love of pleasure down, but I grew weary of crossing myself every minute, and began to think that I was over particular ; and from that time I grew worse and worse. Oh ! I could not tell any one how bad," she said, hiding her face in the bed-clothes.

I have no right, I said, to probe your conscience ; nor do I wish to hear the particulars of what lies on your mind, with so much bitterness ; all I wish to assure you is, that " the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin," and that whatever deep guilt is weighing you down, that there is no part of it that this precious blood cannot blot out : " Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isa. i. 18.

" Oh yes," she answered, " if I deserved it, if I had kept my promise, and done my duty, then he would have looked over

what I did before that, and I should have the comfort of thinking he had nothing against me; but now, I expect nothing but death and judgment, and I have earned them well."

It is very true, I answered, that the wages of sin is death, (everlasting death,) and this is indeed what you deserve, and what I deserve, and what every child of Adam has, as you say, earned; but God has a gift of pardon for every one who seeks for it in the name of Jesus Christ. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 23.

I saw by her countenance that her mind was not relieved, and opening the Bible, I read from the 3d chapter of St. John's gospel, from the 14th to the 18th verses: fearing to tire her, I put a mark in the place, and having begged of her to read the passage over and over again, I kneeled down and prayed aloud, that God would, for Christ's sake, send his Holy Spirit, and enable her to believe that he pardoned sin freely, that Christ "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" that "He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring sinners to God;" and that "He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

In passing through the kitchen, on my way out of the house, I saw a young woman at work, and asked her, if she was related to Catherine Phillips; she replied, that she was her husband's sister. How long has she been ill? I asked. "She was delicate during the winter months, and complained of a pain in her side; but latterly she has been much worse both in body and mind," was the reply. I said, She appears very unhappy. "Indeed, ma'am," said the young woman, "from the way she speaks, one might suppose sometimes that she was a very wicked woman; but no one else would give her the same character. She is loving and kind to all about her, and had always a ready hand to help a poor neighbour, as far as she had it in her power. I never heard a fault found with her, except that she was a little high in her manner, and that she kept the children from school and church when she had not the means of sending them nicely dressed. Our minister told her it was pride, madam, and that she ought to conquer it." That was quite true, I replied; for whoever allows pride to govern them, will assuredly be brought

down. I trust, however, that Mrs. Phillips may not only see the evil of her sin, but seek and find the pardon of it.

Thus ended my first visit to Catherine Phillips. My spirits were depressed as I returned home; and while I mourned over her melancholy state of hopelessness, standing, as she did, on the brink of eternity, I felt, too, that a solemn call had been given to myself, for renewed thanksgiving, that I had, without suffering the terrors of despair, been gently drawn to cast anchor for my own guilty soul, on the free promise of salvation in Christ Jesus. How did I wish that some whom I tenderly loved, and who were still living in a state of forgetfulness of God, could witness the distress of this poor woman, that they might be taught, through the influences of the Holy Spirit, the tendency of unrepented and unpardoned sin to produce despair, and learn to flee to Christ as the only refuge from the wrath to come!

In a few days I again visited the afflicted Catherine Phillips. She appeared glad to see me. I told her I had been thinking much of her since my last visit, and that I should consider it a mercy to myself from God, if I could alleviate either her bodily or her mental sufferings. We are poor, weak, and sinful creatures, I said, and I do not know how soon I may want a friend to soothe my own sick bed; and after all, when either rich or poor are laid as low as you are, there is but one Friend that can help and give us confidence. King David felt the truth of this, when he said, "Though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." I trust God will enable you to use the same words, before he removes you from this world of sin and sorrow.

"O madam," she replied, "if I could say that, I should be willing to bear any suffering he might please to lay upon me for the punishment of my sins."

Indeed, Mrs. Phillips, I believe you; and if our sufferings here could atone for our sins, it would be a wise choice to have them laid on us in time, and not in eternity; but we have sinned against an eternal God, and no atonement but that made by God our Saviour can save us from eternal punishment.

"It is true, it is very true," she said. "I do not expect to get off with only the pains of my body; there is worse in store for me than all this; but it will do me no good to think

of what cannot be helped. I only wish I could put it out of my head."

I grieve to find you still so unhappy, I said. Have you forgotten what I told you from the Bible when I saw you last?

"No, madam, I remember it very well; but it does not come near my case, for I know things of myself that no one else can be the judge of." And again, with an agonized look, she said, "You do not know me."

I certainly do not know to what you allude, I replied; and I should be sorry to make you think lightly of any sin; but will you tell me, if you think there never was so great a sinner as yourself pardoned and received into glory.

"I am sure," said she, "there never was a worse sinner on the face of the earth; for what can be worse than sin all over; nothing but sin."

I suppose, then, you have committed every wickedness to which you were inclined.

"No one could be worse," she replied.

You have been unfaithful to your husband?

"Oh no, ma'am; God forbid!"

You have been a blasphemer?

"No, madam, I always had a dread of that sin."

Well, then, you tried to make others blaspheme; and persecuted them for trying to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Oh God forbid, God forbid!" she cried. "It is bad enough to ruin my own soul, without destroying the souls of others."

Do you think your sin would have been of a deeper dye if you had done this?

"Yes, madam, for then I should be like the devil himself."

And yet, said I, there is a man now in heaven who was guilty of this very sin, and if God had mercy enough to pardon his iniquity, do you think his arm is shortened that it cannot reach to you?

"But how do you know that he was pardoned?" she replied. "Who can tell what God dealt out to him after he died?"

God himself has told us the wonderful story, and I will now read it to you, from 1 Tim. i. 13—16.

In this place, St. Paul is speaking of himself, and of

what he had formerly done against believers in Christ: "I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

"Oh, madam," said she, "read that again." I did so, repeating three or four times, "For a pattern to them which should believe on him to life everlasting." Mark those words, I implore you; Christ has told us, he had mercy on a blasphemer, and a persecutor, that other sinners might have "a pattern," and never doubt that he would have mercy on them also, when they came to him for life everlasting.

When I looked up, Mrs. Phillips's eyes were closed; she did not move for a few seconds, and then tears trickled down her cheeks. As soon as she recovered herself, she said, "God bless you, madam; that is the first pleasant thought I ever saw in the Testament. Oh! is it possible, he could save a blasphemer, and that it is written on purpose for such a wretch as I am? O merciful Saviour," she cried out, "pardon me after this pattern, and then take me to thyself. But, dear madam, are you sure it is true?"

I felt so much overcome that I could scarcely reply. I told her that there was the same authority for believing that St. Paul had been pardoned, as there was for believing that he had been a persecutor; and that the Spirit of God had directed the account, of both the sin and the pardon, to be left on record, knowing that many sinners would, like her, require such an instance to be made known to them, before they could believe that there was hope for their souls.

I then turned to the 9th of Acts, and read from the beginning to the end of the 22d verse. You see, I said, how quickly Christ can change a cruel opposer of his gospel, into a zealous and powerful preacher of it, and bring the heart of a proud pharisee to call upon that precious name which he once compelled others to blaspheme. Who that

saw Saul setting out upon his persecuting expedition to Damascus, could imagine that he would have been an apostle before he arrived there? or that he, who only sought to punish the worshippers of Jesus, should, in a few short hours, cry to him with an obedient heart, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

"Indeed, madam, it is wonderful, and there can be no doubt that St. Paul was converted; but that was a miraculous circumstance altogether, and he did so much for God afterwards, that he had a right to look for mercy; but, as for me, what can I do?"

I replied, St. Paul's conversion was miraculous, no doubt, and we are not to expect such an outward miracle in the conversion of sinners at present. St. Paul's case is "a pattern," not of the manner in which Christ was pleased to effect such a change in his character and conduct, but that He really did arrest him, in mercy, while in the full course of his sin and malignity, and turned him "out of darkness, into marvellous light." Observe, Saul had nothing but hatred and enmity against Christ, in his heart, when the Saviour stopped him with that piercing saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He had no reason to give why Christ should have mercy upon him, but what was to be found in the compassionate heart of the Redeemer himself, and, when called to teach others where to trace the cause of their spiritual blessings, he brought forward the lesson he had learned in his own case. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us." Be assured, that God willeth not the death of a sinner, but that you are invited to come, this moment, as you are, after the pattern of Saul, and to take hold of the promise, for your comfort, that "He will in no wise cast you out."

There was a calm upon the countenance of the poor woman; she seemed stilled and unable to speak. After some minutes, she said, "Dear madam, do you think really that I may venture to hope? Oh! do not deceive me, do not try to comfort me, by telling me that God is merciful to others, unless you are sure he will have mercy upon me. I should rather know the worst, and expect it, than to find myself in hell, when I thought I was going to heaven."

God forbid, I replied, that I should deceive you; my only wish is, that you should hear and believe what God

himself tells you. He has commanded us to build our hopes on Jesus Christ. Listen to these words, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste," Isa. xxviii. 16; and he tells us who this foundation is, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11. Now, do you think God would tell you that he himself laid this foundation, and that he would call it "precious," and "tried," and "sure," and thus encourage your confidence in order to disappoint you?

"And do you mean to say, madam," said Mrs. Phillips, "that I may stake my soul on the bare promise, without any recommendation, and just ask Him to save me, because I cannot save myself?"

Indeed I do mean to say so; and the Saviour meant to say so too when he spoke that beautiful parable of the two debtors, one of whom owed his creditors more and the other less, and "when they had nothing to pay, he freely forgave them both."

"O madam," she said, "that is the parable my father was always talking about. Many a time I have heard him say, 'Nothing to pay,' just as if speaking to himself, when he was propped up in bed, after he got the fall, from which he never recovered. Little did I then think of the meaning of his words. Oh! my dear father, did he think he wanted such a pardon as I want, when he had been serving God all the days of his life?"

I added, Every one that knows himself aright will feel that he deserves nothing but punishment from God; but I am sure, from what you say, your father believed in the free pardon which Christ offers. May he enable you to do the same, and you will rejoice to all eternity, and join the song of the redeemed, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

Having said this, I again kneeled beside her, and implored the God who hears and answers prayer to send his Spirit into the heart of this afflicted woman, that she might, by his powerful influence, be drawn to the Saviour, and that a spirit of grace and supplication might be poured upon her soul, to enable her to spread all her sorrows, and her necessities, at the footstool of mercy. When I rose from my knees, Mrs. Phillips's eyes were turned upwards

with an expression of intense feeling. I stood waiting for a few moments, looking at her with a feeling of anxiety, which those may estimate who know the value of salvation. But who can duly estimate the importance of that moment, when a soul first finds its way to the throne of God, in the name of Jesus? When I saw that she had ceased praying, and that her cheeks and forehead were becoming flushed, I said, I will leave you now, as I fear you are exhausted. The place in the first chapter of 1st Timothy is marked, and I beg you will comfort your heart, by reading and thinking it over, till I see you again.

"Thank you, thank you, madam, a thousand times," she replied. "It was God that sent you to tell me that my soul can be saved; may God enable me to believe it. And, dear madam, come back soon; O come, and tell me more about the Saviour."

The next time I saw Catherine Phillips I observed that her disease was daily rendering her weaker: she nevertheless brightened up on seeing me, and said she had been watching for my visit.

I take that as a good sign, said I, cheerfully, that you have found consolation in the truths to which I endeavoured to point your attention.

"O yes, madam," she replied; "thank God there is a load removed from my heart, that was weighing it down in wretchedness. Oh! the happy hours I have passed since you were here. God is very good to me, and lets me confess my sins to him, without fear. He knows them all, and yet, I am sure, he will forgive me, after the pattern which he has given of his mercy to Saul of Tarsus."

I rejoice to hear you say so; for God's Spirit alone, can lead any sinner thus to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Have you had this peace ever since I saw you last?

"No, madam, all my fears returned the first night; I had a blister on, and was unable to lie down. When the house was quiet, I began to think of all you had said, and to try to pray. But oh! the sight I got of my iniquities. It seemed as if I was only insulting the Saviour in daring to look up to him, and in this distress I opened the Testament intending to read over all the passages you had marked for me; and I cannot now tell how, but my eyes rested on another place, and the words came to my heart, like the voice of God himself. I have the place marked,

madam, for fear of falling back again into misery. There it is."

I read, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 6—8.

"That is what I want," she said, "a Saviour that saves the ungodly, and died for sinners: 'ungodly,' and 'sinner,' these are my names, and now I know he will save me, for I remember and believe the promise my father loved so well, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.'"

After some further conversation with Mrs. Phillips, she asked me to read to her. I selected the 130th Psalm, and told her, that I thought it suited persons, who, like her, had been suffering great distress of mind on account of their sins. After reading the Psalm quite through, I returned to the fourth verse, "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." Here, I said, we are told what feeling the assurance of God's forgiveness is intended to produce in our hearts. It is, that he may be feared, not with the slavish fear which would lead us to flee from him as an enemy, but with the childlike fear of displeasing him as a Father. And yet many people suppose that, if sinners are told that there is forgiveness with God, it will only encourage them to go on in their wickedness. Do you think that the text which has brought such peace to your mind will have this effect upon you?

"I do not like to say much about myself, madam," she replied, "for I am both weak and wicked; but I know that, if I took that liberty out of the Saviour's sufferings and mercy, I should deserve worse than all I ever dreaded, and that is the blackness of darkness for ever and ever."

From this time Catherine Phillips might truly be said to find joy and peace in believing, and to have an understanding given to her of the meaning of Scripture which was astonishing.

I reminded her one day of what she had said of St. Paul's having a right to look for mercy, on account of the services which he rendered to Christ after his conversion.

"I said that in my ignorance, dear madam," she replied, "for I knew nothing at that time of a pardon bestowed upon

sinners when they first turned to the cross of Christ: besides, I thought then that God's service was slavery; but there is a text in Ephesians which has taught me that St. Paul felt it a favour to be allowed to preach the gospel. Here it is, in the third chapter and eighth verse. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

In my frequent visits to this now happy woman I felt humbled in perceiving how constantly her faith and love were manifested, and how much more joy and peace in believing she possessed than I was privileged to call my own.

On entering her room one day, I found her eyes swollen and red with weeping, and immediately expressed a fear that she was allowing her hope in the Saviour's promise to be weakened.

She said, "No, dear madam, he gives me grace to cling to him in the midst of all my bitter thoughts; and I trust, even in death, that Satan will not cause me to flinch."

May I ask then, said I, what has grieved you?

"The recollection of my pride, and its evil consequences, madam," she replied. "Do you hear that cough through the wall? My next neighbour is sick, madam, and I cannot now tell her how sorry I am that we did not live on more friendly terms. Oh! if I could ask her pardon, and speak to her about the Saviour. That is the woman that I despised in my heart because she went to the sacrament without making friends with me, and I thought myself a better christian, because I staid at home, that I might indulge my anger."

Have you never tried since that time to be reconciled to her? said I.

"Yes, madam, but she is angry still; my daughter took her some of that nice jelly you brought me yesterday, and she refused to take it. It was this that grieved me, and brought my sin to remembrance. O madam, could I ask you to go and see her? How I wish there was a door from this room into hers, and then she could hear all the comfortable words you say to me!"

I went at once to the next house, and found the old woman sitting by the fire, and coughing violently.

I said I had heard her cough through the wall, and that I wished to know if she had any thing to relieve it.

"Yes madam, thank you: good Mrs. M. gave me a fine bottle, but it does me no good."

Mrs. M. is kind to every one, I answered; it was from her that I heard of your sick neighbour, Catherine Phillips, who I am afraid is dying. Have you seen her lately?

"No madam, my cough is too bad to go out of doors this weather," she replied. "Mrs. Phillips is one I never much liked; and she had the impudence to say that I was very mean for taking parish money, when I had two sons that could help me. How did she know whether they could or not?"

I told her Catherine Phillips had sent me in to ask her pardon, and after a few words of advice, on the duty of forgiving those who trespass against us, she allowed me to tell Catherine that she would take the jelly, and be friends.

"This is more than I deserve," said poor Catherine; "but I take the comfort of it, out of the merciful hands of Him who only knows how my heart was lifted up above her, when I ought to have been confessing my odious pride, and my neglect of God's ordinances. O madam, when I think of the sabbaths I have profaned, of the years I have lived calling Christ my Saviour, when I had no idea of any salvation but by my own works, it fills me with wonder to see how the Lord bore with me, and preserved my life, till I learned my own wickedness, and the love of God my Saviour."

Mrs. Phillips made many good remarks which I have forgotten. On one occasion, while listening to the second commandment, she exclaimed, "What a merciful God to care enough for such guilty creatures as to be jealous of us if we forget him!" At another time, when I took a clergyman to visit her, I found her very weak, and scarcely able to open her eyes. She excused herself for keeping them closed, but begged the gentleman would read to her. He repeated a few texts from different parts of Scripture, making some observations as he proceeded, and spoke of the mercy of Christ, mentioned in Acts ii. 38, 39, in sending the grace of repentance to his very murderers, thus giving a partial fulfilment to that prophecy, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn," &c. &c. At these words a large vein appeared in Mrs. Phillips's forehead, her face was suffused with a dark livid colour, and she seemed nearly choking. I thought her about to expire,

but was kept from moving by the clergyman. After about a minute, the convulsed look was gone, and a rush of tears flowed down the pale cheek of the dying woman, while, in a voice scarcely audible, she repeated, "Whom I have pierced, whom I have pierced."

Thus she continued to the last, bearing all her sufferings with the most exemplary patience, endeavouring to interest her husband and children in the great truths of the gospel, praying for them with increased earnestness as she felt her death approaching; and, at the end of about three months from the time she first found comfort in the promises of the Saviour, she entered into the rest which remains for the people of God.

Lord, thou hast won! at length I yield;
My heart, by mighty grace compell'd,
Surrenders all to thee:
Against thy terrors long I strove,
But who can stand against thy love?
Love conquers even me.

But since thou hast thy love reveal'd,
And shown my soul a pardon seal'd,
I can resist no more;
Could'st thou for such a sinner bleed?
Can'st thou for such a rebel plead?
I wonder and adore.

If thou hadst bid thy thunders roll,
And lightnings flash, to blast my soul,
I still had stubborn been;
But mercy has my heart subdued,
A bleeding Saviour I have view'd,
And now I hate my sin.

Now, Lord, I would be thine alone;
Come, take possession of thine own,
For thou hast set me free;
Released from Satan's hard command,
See all my powers waiting stand,
To be employ'd by thee.

My will conform'd to thine would move;
On thee my hope, desire, and love,
In fix'd attention join;
My hands, my eyes, my ears, my tongue,
Have Satan's servants been too long,
But now they shall be thine.

And can I be the very same
Who lately durst blaspheme thy name,
And on thy gospel tread?
Surely each one who hears my case,
Will praise thee and confess thy grace
Invincible indeed!

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THE CONVERSION

OF THE LATE

REV. JOSEPH SWAIN:

RELATED BY HIMSELF, IN A LETTER TO A BELOVED CHRISTIAN BROTHER.

THE writer of the following lines preached the gospel at Walworth: his labours there were greatly blessed, but his course was short. For four years his efforts were crowned with growing success, when it pleased his heavenly Father to call him to his rest. He wrote several poems on religious subjects, and, in the following verses, gave an account of his own conversion to a Christian friend.

Dear brother in Christ, though I see not your face
Your name is engraved on my heart;
And oft, with delight, I contemplate the place
Where, soon, we shall meet not to part.

But, oh! to that grace which has saved us from hell,
What debtors we have been, and are!
We must be content, if the whole we would tell,
To wait till we both arrive there.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799;
56, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

Yet, though I am conscious the height of God's love,
And depths of his wisdom and grace,
Will never be known till we sing them above,
I cannot but aim at his praise.

Though high is the theme, and the ransom'd in heaven
To reach it, exert all their skill;
For one to be silent, whose sins are forgiven,
Is surely more difficult still.

Look back, then, my soul, and, by mercy constrain'd,
Declare what thy Saviour has done;
When first over Satan and sin he obtain'd
That conquest which prov'd thee his own.

A slave to the passions which fetter mankind,
And mark them as servants of sin,
And yet to self-righteousness strongly inclin'd
My heart was both proud and unclean.

To gratify self, and gain human applause,
I studied, and strove night and day;
And heaven-bestow'd talents, in pleasure's vain cause,
Exerted my powers to display.

But thoughts of eternity oft would intrude,
And conscience on judgment would muse,
"How must I of God with abhorrence be view'd,
While thus all his gifts I abuse!"

Till secret alarms, in the season of sleep,
Disturb'd and prevented my rest;
By pointing my fears to the bottomless deep,
My envy, to seats of the blest.

'Twas then, with reluctance, I purchas'd the book
Where God's righteous will is reveal'd;
Intending but seldom within it to look,
My eyes to its worth being seal'd.

I wanted to flee from the danger of hell,
Yet sinful enjoyments retain;
And foolishly thought if I sometimes did well,
I safely might swerve now and then.

But while I was seeking on his holy day,
(Behold the long-suff'ring of God!)
Unhallow'd delight in perusing a play,
The Bible my purpose withstood.

"God's word, thus neglected, will one day appear
A witness against thee," it said;
'Twas whisper'd to conscience, and fill'd me with fear,
When, trembling, I open'd and read:

"Cut off that right hand, and pluck out that right eye,
And sell not thy soul for thy sin;
Tis better, though maim'd, from destruction to fly,
Than whole, in thy lusts, to fall in."*

This pierc'd through my soul, like a two-edged sword,
And laid my heart open to view:
I felt both the truth and the power of the word;
My sins were intended, I knew.

Thenceforward a struggle commenc'd in my mind
'Twixt present and future concerns:
But still I, in secret, to present inclin'd;
While thus I reflected by turns:

* Matt. v. 29, 30.

"Suppose, all through life, I in luxury roll,
And swim in delights to the grave,
And lose, for my pleasures, the life of my soul,
What recompense then shall I have?

"Yet what is my life worth to me if I part
With all my companions in mirth?"
Friends, prospects, amusements, all clung round my heart,
And seem'd to demand it for earth.

Too oft from reflection I hasted away,
To lose my sad thoughts in a crowd,
Or drown them in mirth at a ball or a play;
But conscience e'en there would intrude.

I trembled to think of His all-seeing eyes,
Which watch'd me through all my career;
And thought on the day when the dead must arise,
With horror akin to despair.

That word which bold infidels dare to dispute,
Which God did in mercy inspire,
I found like an axe which is laid to the root,
To cut down a tree for the fire.

The precepts demanding obedience I read,
O'erwhelm'd with confusion and shame;
The threat'nings, like thunder, roll'd over my head,
And darted, like lightnings, their flame.

But neither the danger of hell I was in,
Nor dread of displeasure Divine,
Could turn from the love, or the practice of sin,
A heart so rebellious as mine.

Too often I vow'd, if the Lord would forgive
My many iniquities past,
That holy and just I in future would live,
And merit his favour at last.

But vows, when my passions recovered their fire,
Like Samson's green withs from his hands,
Gave place to the strength of unholy desire,
And prov'd ineffectual bands.

Till infinite Mercy from Calvary flew,
And whisper'd in accents divine
"The power that first made thee must form thee anew
Or glory can never be thine.

"Thy thoughts are polluted, thy heart is depraved,
Thy soul is all leprous with sin;
Thy passions and powers are by Satan enslav'd,
Thy conscience itself is unclean.

"No sinner, except he is born from above,
Can ever in heaven reside;
Or meet the pure eyes of his Maker with love,
Or in his bright presence abide."

Scarce had I objected, "How can this thing be?"
When Mercy replied, with a smile,
"The thing that's impossible, mortal, with thee,
Jehovah can work when he will."

That moment a spark of celestial desire
Was kindled, and flam'd in my breast;
I wrestled with God, and began to aspire
To hope I should enter his rest.

Amaz'd at myself, that I durst be so bold
To plead for salvation with God,
I wonder'd still more on the cross to behold
My pardon and peace seal'd with blood.

Myself and my Saviour I saw with new eyes,
My Bible I read with new light;
New feelings within me excited surprise,
And God was my only delight.

His glorious perfections with pleasure I saw,
Where justice and mercy combin'd;
His grace, in the gospel—his truth, in the law,
Like sun-beams shone forth on my mind.

With holy complacence and rapture divine,
I felt his omnipotent love;
As God all-sufficient, I knew he was mine,
My portion, below and above.

What pleasures I tasted in that sacred hour,
I never on earth can express;
When Christ was reveal'd to my conscience with power,
And form'd in my heart, by his grace.

The love and the guilt of transgression at once
Expir'd, when my Surety was seen;
The service of sin I resolv'd to renounce
The service of God to begin.

For wisdom and strength I look'd up to my Lord,
To help me to walk in his light;
And he, by his Spirit, explaining his word,
Directed my footsteps aright,

No sweet silver trumpet saluted my ears,
With tidings of mercy from heaven;
No voice of persuasion dissolv'd me in tears,
Or told me how sins were forgiven.

But all was as silent as springing of flowers,
Or light, while it shines from above,
When mercy descended, like soft summer showers,
And melted my heart into love.

Almighty the voice was, yet perfectly still,
Which first bade me live, and be whole;
New-moulding my passions, persuading my will,
Diffusing new life through my soul.

So great was the change I experienc'd within,
I scarce could believe it was true:
Such love to my God, and such hatred to sin,
My soul till that hour never knew.

I thought it was glory commencing below,
Yea, heaven in perfection on earth;
When first in my bosom I felt the pure glow
Of life, from a heavenly birth.

As love to the heart, and as light to the eyes,
So pleasant to me was the word,
Which fill'd me with calm and delightful surprise,
By pointing my thoughts to the Lord.

The Spirit of Jesus reveal'd Him to me,
The gift of unchangeable love;
And taught me in Him, as my Surety, to see
My title to mansions above.

Now near fourteen years I have liv'd on His grace,
And still to his word find him true;
And oft, as I gain a fresh glimpse of his face,
My strength in his ways I renew.

His frown more than death or destruction I dread
His smile from all care sets me free:
His mercy, full orb'd, when it shines on my head,
Is glory's bright morning to me.

And soon, when my work in his vineyard is done,
I hope to behold him above;
To sit with my Lord on his glorious high throne
And taste all the fruits of his love.

To Him that is holy, and righteous, and true,
My Lord, My Redeemer, my God!
To him all the glory for ever is due,
Which flows from redemption by blood.

O help me, dear brother, to shout forth His praise,
And sound his salvation aloud;
For nothing but sovereign, omnipotent grace,
Could bring such a rebel to God!

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THE

CONVERTED SAILOR;

OR,

AN ACCOUNT OF E. W. STANLEY

LATE OF H. M. S. CALEDONIA.

BY A FRIEND OF SAILORS.

ON the 27th of May, 1834, I was informed that a person of the name of Stanley was very ill, quite in a despairing state, and wished much to see a visitor of the sick: I accordingly called upon him that day.

I was introduced to a tall and well proportioned sailor, but much weakened by disease. His friends informed me, that he had been a remarkably stout and fine man, the pride of his ship's company, but since January, (only a few months,) pining sickness had reduced his frame to extreme weakness; thus strikingly verifying the declaration of the psalmist, that when God with rebukes does correct man for iniquity, he maketh his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity, Psalm xxxix. 11.

Expressing my sorrow at seeing him thus weakened, he told me that his was a liver complaint, and that he had broken something in his inside by lifting heavy weights below deck. I then inquired into the state of his mind. He acknowledged that he was a great sinner. "My temptations sir," he said, "have been very great; no one knows what they are aboard ship but a sailor."

I replied, I was fully aware they were great, and that I pitied sailors on this account. They had more temptations and fewer religious privileges than many others. Notwithstanding, there had been many pious sailors, who, in the midst of these disadvantages, had lived near to God. In

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY; INSTITUTED 1799;
DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER-ROW

making, therefore, excuses for sin, we must be careful not to put the blame on others. If we did not love sin, no temptation would prevail over us. We may be tempted, but we cannot be compelled to commit sin. Our safety then consists, not in making excuses, but in humbly confessing our guilt before God, and earnestly praying for his forgiveness.

"Sir," he exclaimed, "I cannot pray. I don't know how to pray; and I feel that I dare not pray. I am too vile to come before God. Oh! I cannot be pardoned! If I live, I will never do the like again!"

I replied, "You would do the same again, were you to be restored to health to-morrow, unless your heart were changed by Divine grace." I then directed him to go to the Lord just as he was, however vile he appeared in his own eyes, recollecting that God already knew all his transgressions, and that he should humbly confess them. I read the 51st Psalm, as directing and encouraging him freely to acknowledge, like David, his transgressions, saying even to the Lord, "Against Thee—Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

I found him on my next visit under deep conviction of sin, and still afraid God would not pardon him. He said, "I have a weight and a burden at my heart which I cannot get removed."

I asked how long he had felt this. "For some time, sir; ever since I was at Malta." Here his voice faltered; his eyes filled with tears, which I perceived he wiped away with his finger, while he solemnly confessed and mourned over the wicked life he had led. I read to him the declaration of the apostle Paul, 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering for a pattern" mark, for *a pattern*—"to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." "You have here the example of a sinner obtaining mercy, and that for your encouragement." I asked if he doubted the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to save him. "No, I cannot do that." "Then do you doubt his willingness?" "Yes, that is my fear." I then turned down the leaves of his Bible to several promises made to penitent sinners, and begged him to plead them at the

throne of grace. Then I added, "Now let us unite in prayer to Almighty God for their fulfilment."

After prayer he thanked me, and shaking me by the hand, with much feeling, said, "Sir, your conversation, and especially your prayer, have greatly comforted me. I feel the weight at my heart much relieved. It has done me good."

Among the few books he had read was the "Pilgrim's Progress," which had greatly pleased him. "As a mere tale," I remarked, "it was very entertaining. But now, perhaps, were you to read it, you would be able to understand its spiritual meaning. That weight you complain of, is the same as the burden of sin on the poor pilgrim's back; and be assured you will never get rid of that load till, like the pilgrim, you come to the cross of Christ. Do you recollect the part? It is this: 'I saw in my dream,' says the author, 'that just as Christian came up to the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back; and began to tumble and so continued to do, till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.' And this," said I, "perhaps, may be your experience."

I saw him again on the 31st. He was weaker, and complained of a difficulty in breathing. But much more did he complain of his sinful life. He said, "I have read, sir, all the promises you marked, and they are fine, but I cannot apply them yet." I then directed him how to use them in prayer. "For instance, when God says, 'A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh,' Ezek. xxxvi. 26, you must plead this promise, believing that God will fulfil it, and say, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me,' Psalm li. 10. When God says, 'I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more,' Heb. viii. 12; you should therefore pray, 'For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness's sake, O Lord,' Psalm xxv. 11, 7. In this manner you may turn any part of the Scriptures into prayer for yourself; and there will be this advantage in it, you will be praying for the very blessing God has promised to bestow."

"Sometimes," he said, "I have a little light and comfort, but it passes away, and I am in much misery and fear." He then exclaimed with great earnestness and feeling, "Oh! if I could but walk in the right way, the way of righteousness." Thus holy were his desires, with now and then a ray of hope, and then again his mind was clouded by a sense of guilt.

When I again saw him, he said, "My mind, sir, is a little relieved. I can pray better than I could, and I feel great relief in praying. Oh, if I were to be restored to health, I would not neglect these things. I would keep my present views and feelings, and never lose sight of them, nor leave the way I am now trying to walk in, so that I might see God and live."

I cautioned him not to make vows or resolutions in his own strength, and exhorted him to continue in prayer.

On the 3rd of June he was not so well. He seemed deeply penitent, and said he felt his wretched state. "I sometimes sit for hours, sir, thinking of my ways, and am wretched. My hair seems fairly to be raised upon my head. I feel such horror as I cannot describe. O, sir, I know I have much to do, much to be pardoned, much to be removed, before I can expect the mercy of God." I urged him to go to the Lord Jesus Christ just as he was, however vile he appeared in his own sight, saying—

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all:
Not the righteous,
Sinners, Jesus came to call."

And then I added—

"Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream:
All the fitness Christ requireth,
Is to feel your need of him;
This he gives you,—
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

I then directed his attention to 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." "And yet, such were some of those now in glory. How can this be? Why, the apostle says, 'they were washed' in the precious blood of

Jesus, which cleanseth from all sin; 'they were sanctified,' that is, made holy by the Spirit of the Lord; and 'they were justified,' that is, counted as righteous by the righteousness of Christ, which was imputed to them. And you may 'hope through the grace of the Lord Jesus, to be saved as they were!'"

I exhorted him to continue in prayer, to ask for himself, yea to keep knocking till the door of mercy should be opened.

I saw him the next day, when he lamented his want of breath to pray, and also that he had not strength to kneel down, but was obliged to pray sitting in his chair. I assured him that God would have compassion on his infirmity, and that the posture was of little consequence, so that he prayed from the heart. And though words should fail, yet it is said in the 145th Psalm, that "God will fulfil the desire of them that fear him."

"Sir," he said, "I cannot get much comfort, the load, the weight, the something which I cannot describe, lies on my heart. Oh, there is much I know to be done, much for me to do, before I can see the Lord."

He did not mean that he was to do anything by way of merit, for I particularly asked him this, and he replied, "Merit, sir, what can I merit? I am not worthy of any mercy, nor can ever be. But there is much to be done within. I am sure there is, for such a sinner as I have been."

A few days after, being much worse, he said, as I entered, "I have been praying, sir, all the day." "For what have you prayed?" "I pray to be forgiven—that I may be released, and dwell with the angelic host in the kingdom of heaven; this is my desire and prayer, sir."

"Part of your prayer," I replied, "is proper; but to be released from a body of pain before you know your soul is safe, would not be a blessing were God to grant it."

I read to him the encouraging language of the prophet, Isaiah lv.—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."—"It is impossible," he said, "for words to be clearer or more encouraging."

The next day he said to me, "Sir, I have kept praying for mercy, that the blessed Jesus would have mercy on me. All day long have I prayed that God would 'abundantly pardon;'" thus repeating the very promise I had read to

him the night before. Finding that he needed comfort, I read 1 John iv. and dwelt much upon the character of God, as being the God of love. "It was displayed," I said, "in creating you a rational being, capable of enjoying communion with him. Then, in preserving you amidst all your perils at sea; and in bringing you home to this quiet chamber for meditation and prayer. Your very affliction, though so severe, is designed by God in love; it is to bring you back to himself from whom you have so long wandered. But the gift of Jesus was the greatest proof of Divine love. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, 'because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' Also his promises are all free and full of love; and his willingness to receive all who come to him by Christ, proves his amazing love to returning, penitent sinners. These are proofs then, that God is love! O, do not, I entreat you, form hard thoughts of God. Do not think your affliction is only in anger to consume you; that God will not hear your prayers, nor save your soul from hell. 'He will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry: when he shall hear it, he will answer thee,'" Isa. xxx. 19.

He listened with the greatest attention, suppressing his groans, but his pains were so great that he said they would drive him mad. I then directed his thoughts to the sufferings of Jesus, as being infinitely greater than any we could suffer, because his was agony of soul, and he endured the wrath of God which we had deserved. Yes, "he bore our sins in his own body on the tree," 1 Pet. ii. 24.

Friday evening, the 13th, I called to see him. He was much altered. A change had taken place an hour before I came. He was calm and sensible, and had been talking to those about him in a delightful manner.

I then inquired of him as to his hope of salvation.

"I cannot say," he cautiously replied, "I believe I shall be saved; but I can say I have hope I shall be saved. I am built upon a foundation." "What is that foundation?" "Christ Jesus, my Lord," he firmly answered: "my hope is on Christ."

At another time, I asked if he thought God had pardoned him. He answered very deliberately, and with pleasing

animation, "I think I may say, I am sure my sins are forgiven. If I had strength one day more, sir, I would spend it in prayer." "Perhaps, rather you would spend it in praise, since you believe your sins are pardoned. You would tell to all around, what a dear Saviour you had found." "Ah, sir, so I would, so I ought—in praise; yes, I would spend it in praise; that's right."

To a shipmate who came to see him, he said, "It won't be much longer, Richard. I have had a great fight for it, ah! that I have; a hard fight, believe me; but I wouldn't yield, and it is all clear now. Oh! he is a Saviour—yes—a Saviour to me. I went to prayer, Richard, and blessed the Lord for his kindness."

Upon my going over to him, he asked me, in a very serious manner, "Sir, I am not building upon a dream, am I, or on a voice?" "No," I said, "you are depending upon something firmer. Be not distressed, it is easy to be accounted for: the promises I read to you the night before left this pleasing impression on your mind. Don't you remember the words of Jesus which I mentioned to you, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?' And those in Rev. xxii. 17, 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely?'" "Oh yes, sir, I do."

"How is the weight you complained of at your heart?" "O, sir, it is all removed." "Have you comfort?" "Yes, my mind is easy." "But you were once afraid it would not be so, that God would not hear your prayer, nor forgive you?" "Yes, sir, I was." "But if you recollect, I told you, that, like Christian, in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' when by faith you should see the cross, it would be taken away." "Yes; so it is." "And where is it now?" "Rolled down into the sepulchre of my Lord," he replied, with energy.

Thus he lay calm and composed, talking without fear about death and judgment. I said to those who were standing round his bed, "See the blessed effects of faith in Christ! How it supports the mind. Instead of making him melancholy or wretched, by reminding him of eternity and of his real situation as a dying man, it is the only thing that removes the fear of death, and makes him resigned and even joyful. You hear how calmly we can speak of these

solemn and awful subjects, instead of trying, as many do, to keep them out of the minds of the sick, lest they should be made miserable. Oh, then, let us seek for an interest in the religion of Jesus, that we may be comforted in a dying hour."

On the 14th, the last day that he lived, I went early in the morning to see him. His mind was tranquil. I read many portions of the Bible to him, and he listened with much pleasure. I was informed that he prayed very earnestly and sweetly after I left.

He said to his wife, "Mary, the Lord is all-sufficient, and full of mercy; more sufficient and more full of loving kindness than we are. May he give you strength, and confidence, and hope! yes" ——and then he paused a moment, and as though he recollected the Scripture expression, he added—"faith, hope, and charity, and may you see me in my heavenly Father's house. Oh, I shall be happy, my dear!"

I then asked him the following questions. "You have freely confessed your sins unto God, have you not?" "Yes, sir." "And you say you can hope they are pardoned?" "Oh, yes, I hope so." "And you believe in Jesus?" "Yes, sir, he is my Saviour." "You can really say he is your Saviour, can you?" "Yes, he has saved me. Lord Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Then we remained silent, and after this pause, I thus proceeded:—"You know that you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death, do you not?" "Yes, sir, I am." "Do you wish to be restored to health?" "Oh, no." "Has death any sting?" "No, sir." "Why has it no sting?" "Because Christ has taken it away." "But you would be afraid to die if you had not a good hope through grace, for if you recollect, you once had a great fear of death?" "Oh! yes, sir, it would be dreadful."

He called again for his wife, and exerting all his strength to raise his enfeebled arms, he put them round her neck, and said to her most affectionately, "Mary, my dear, you have been a good wife to me; the best of women, that I will say, and have said it before to the gentleman. No woman could have behaved better at all times than you have." Overcome by this expression of love, she fell on his bosom and wept, and tried to comfort him by assuring him also of his kindness and attention to her ever since they had been

married. It was in fact one of those simple and touching scenes of conjugal affection which prove the happiness of mutual love. How superior to the sinful pleasures which sailors so often seek after!

Seeing his end approaching, I said to him, "Stanley, I hope we shall meet again in that place where there shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor sickness, nor death!" "Oh, yes, I hope so, sir." "You have found those promises of God to be true to which I at first directed your mind?" "Oh, yes, all were true." "Is Jesus precious to you?" "Yes, that he is." "And you still feel yourself to be a sinner?" "Oh, yes—yes," shaking his head expressively. "And do you believe the Holy Spirit has changed your heart, that you may be prepared for heaven?" "Yes," he confidently answered, "I do—he has." "Heaven, you know, is a holy place, and if you arrive there, you will sin no more; does this give you pleasure?" "Oh, yes, I shall no more sin." I then read Psalm ciii., the last he heard, and I shall not soon forget the evident delight he manifested while I read the joyful language of the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who crowneth thee with loving kindness, and with tender mercies." "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." "Oh, no, no," he exclaimed, "he has not." "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." "Yes, yes," he cried out, "that it is."

At six o'clock I again saw him, and that for the last time. He was quite collected, and said, "My mind is just the same, no fear, nor terror." He was evidently weaker, and in great pain. I said to him, "It is a pleasing thought that Jesus has redeemed the body as well as the soul; therefore, 'this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!'" "Ah, yes," he added, "victory, victory."

He took some refreshment, and said, "There, that is the last I shall take in this world;" and so it proved. A little after eight he lifted up both his arms, saying, "May I come, Lord!" And then in a softer tone, "Oh, not yet—Well, I'll wait—I am coming—Oh, it won't be long—but I mustn't come yet: well!"—Then taking leave of his wife, he said, "Mary, God bless you: the Lord be with you I am sure he will! Follow in my steps. Follow me!" He then uttered a groan or two—turned upon his back—prayed, saying, "O Lord have mercy upon me," and without a struggle expired in the 45th year of his age.

In reviewing this account, we may trace in Stanley's experience a deep conviction of sin, and that godly sorrow for it which needeth not to be repented of. Also perseverance in prayer, and God's gracious answer to prayer; for at length his mind was enlightened, his distress removed, his fears dispersed; faith and hope, yea, even confidence of salvation, were given to support and comfort him in his last moments.

Let us learn the benefit of affliction. Sickness, though most painful to flesh and blood, is wisely and kindly sent in order to excite us to a more serious concern for our future and eternal state. In the days of health, we are too apt to forget God and eternity. We are thoughtless and careless, even if we do not live in actual sin. But God, perceiving that we abuse his mercies, kindly lays "affliction upon our loins, and weakens our strength in the way." Then we begin to be alarmed at the thought of dying. We find that we are not prepared to appear before him in judgment. Our sins come to our recollection, and distress our minds. Then we confess them, and pray, "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."

But let us not rely upon a death-bed repentance. Let us not even suppose in the days of health that we shall be "cut off by pining sickness." God may not give us time for preparation. An accident may, in a moment, deprive us of our senses, and those "who do business in deep waters," seamen especially, are exposed to storms and shipwreck, and to sudden death.

And although you may be afflicted, yet do not presume. Afflictions are not always sanctified. Oftentimes they stir up evil passions, and cause men to "blaspheme God because of their pains." Oh! then, put not off the vast concerns of your immortal soul till you are sick, when you think you

shall have nothing else to do. You will find then it is enough to bear the pains of the body, without having to contend with a wounded spirit. Give then the prime of your days, give your health and strength to God, and wait not till you are distressed in your minds, and enfeebled in your bodies, before you begin to seek and to serve the Lord

In the experience of Stanley, we may clearly trace the operations of the Spirit on a poor sinner's heart. For it is the Spirit who must convince of sin, righteousness, and of judgment. The knowledge of sin does not necessarily come with affliction. A little while since, I attended a young, depraved creature, who, though she had brought on her illness, and a premature death, by her excesses, yet she made no confession or acknowledgment that she had sinned, but said she had no doubt of going to heaven when God should release her. Conviction of sin is the beginning of the Holy Spirit's operations on the heart.

But conviction is not conversion. There is the "sorrow of the world that leadeth to death." We must also have faith in the Lord Jesus, or we shall not be saved. Observe, the blessed Spirit did not leave this poor man without hope, for he carried on the work of conviction, till at last he enabled him to say, "He has changed my heart, and saved me!"

The comfort also which he at last enjoyed was from the Holy Spirit. Long did his distress for sin remain. But, at length, the Holy Ghost enlightened his mind, removed the burden from his conscience, enabled him to apply the promises to his own case, and to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Let us then give all honour and praise to the Eternal Spirit for his convincing, and sanctifying, and comforting influences.

Let us adore the amazing love of Jesus to the returning sinner. We plainly perceive that he is not "willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Yes, the sinner that falls at his feet, acknowledging his sins, and pleading his atoning blood, shall not plead in vain. Oh, what amazing love is this!

JESUS, at thy command
I launch into the deep,
And leave my native land,
Where sin lulls all to sleep;
For thee I fain would all resign,
And sail to heaven with thee and thine

What though the seas are broad,
  What though the waves are strong,
What though tempestuous winds
  Distress me all along;
Yet what are seas or stormy wind,
Compar'd to Christ, the sinner's Friend?

Christ is my Pilot wise,
  My compass is his word,
My soul each storm defies,
  While I have such a Lord;
I trust his faithfulness and power
To save me in the trying hour.

Though rocks and quicksands deep,
  Through all my passage lie,
Yet Christ shall safely keep,
  And guide me with his eye.
How can I sink with such a prop
That bears the world and all things up?

By faith, I see the land,
  The haven of endless rest;
My soul, thy wings expand,
  And fly to Jesu's breast.
Oh! may I reach the heavenly shore,
Where winds and seas distress no more.

Whene'er becalm'd I lie,
  And all my storms subside,
Then to my succour fly,
  And keep me near thy side;
For more the treach'rous calm I dread,
Than tempests bursting o'er my head.

Come, heavenly wind, and blow
  A prosp'rous gale of grace,
To waft from all below,
  To heaven, my destin'd place.
Then in full sail my port I'll find,
And leave the world and sin behind.

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FARMER B——.

In the month of January, 1835, Farmer B. entered rather abruptly the study of the Rev. Mr. E., requesting him to visit his son who lay very ill of a decline. "O Sir! do come," he exclaimed: they tell me, my son is not born again. *I* do not understand such things, and thought, for my part, we must leave all such matters to God; but they say I am wrong. Sir, do come, if you can." This was an appeal not to be resisted. It would be difficult to say whether the father's anguish for the soul of his child, or his ignorance of the means of salvation, were the most conspicuous.

Mr. E. found the young man in the last stage of a decline. It appeared that his life had been very quiet and respectable, unmarked by any flagrant breach of that decorum which society requires; and he was often to be seen accompanying his family to a place of worship. On these and on similar external marks of respectability, he had in the days of health depended, as passports to heaven; but now, as the solemn hour of death approached, their insufficiency was acknowledged by the inquiring look of intense interest with which he fixed his eyes on Mr. E. the moment he approached the bed-side, as though he would have said, "Is there a hope for me beyond the grave?" He was told, "A Saviour has died to redeem sinners," and was urged to flee to him for mercy, without delay. He lived but one week; and, though there was some hope in his death, yet not such as to afford unmixed consolation to his friends.

The natural death of the child proved the dawn of spiritual life to the father. On leaving the chamber of death, a long and interesting conversation took place between him and the clergyman. He was the father of a large family, children and grandchildren growing up around

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him. This was the first time death had been permitted to make any inroad upon his family circle. The vanity of life, contrasted with the awful realities of eternity, seemed for the first time to affect his mind, and the hitherto impatient, restless man of business, full of self-will, in heart a pharisee, now sat with the patience of a little child yielding quiet acquiescence to the humiliating truth of his being a sinner in the sight of God, and that, with all his boasted integrity of heart, he had never taken one step on the road to heaven. This was a startling and strong assertion, at which the natural man within evinced some risings of rebellion, and he pleaded, though with diffidence, his various alms-deeds, and the many sermons he had heard: *they* had never led him to this view of his state.

Although not a man of education, our farmer was a person of unusually keen intellect. He was what is termed a clear-headed man; and this, in connexion with active, industrious, and frugal habits, had enabled him to realize a handsome competency.

During the conversation above alluded to, on setting forth to him the advantages of a religious life, and stating it to have the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come, "Take the poorest man on your farm," said the clergyman, "who has the love of God in his heart, and he would not exchange situations with the richest man you could name to him, who is not a child of God." Our farmer looked incredulous at this assertion; but, having been so lately convicted of the folly of expressing an opinion where he had no knowledge, he would not hazard a second defeat, and remained silent. One part of the conversation he knew to be correct, from his own experience—That money does not bring happiness; for he had observed his desire for wealth increased with its accumulation: thus preventing all enjoyment, from the still increasing desire for more.

One of the farmer's labourers had long been stigmatized as a "methodist," and he determined to make use of this poor man, as a sort of test for the truth of the clergyman's assertion. The following day, therefore, he accosted him in the fields: "John, I am going to ask you a question of great consequence: will you give me a faithful answer?" "I will, if I can, master." "O, you can, if you will; and, as an honest man, I require of you an honest answer. You know, John, that I am rich, and have all the comforts of life

within my reach: you are poor, work hard from morning till night, have a large family to maintain, and but a scanty meal when your day's work is over. Now, John, would you, if you could change situations with me, in every respect, not only as concerns this life, but including also our prospect for the next, would you take my chance of going to heaven, and give up your own, in consideration of having my many comforts of life?" "Oh no, master! I hope you are not angry, but I could not do that," was the unhesitating, yet respectful answer of the poor labourer.

That faithful "Oh no, master!" went home to his heart, and at once opened his eyes to the insufficiency of that money which for years had been his idol, and for the possession of which he had toiled early and late, and devoted every power he possessed both of mind and body; and now, when in the complete enjoyment of a prosperity exceeding the most sanguine expectations of his early life, the poorest labourer on his farm had declared that he would not exchange situations with him. "That man must have a hope within him to which I am a stranger," was the conviction of his own mind; and from that time he constantly sought opportunities, both in public and private, to gain a knowledge of divine truths. The Bible, which hitherto had been to him as a sealed book, was now resorted to many times in the day; and to him the promise was indeed verified—That none shall seek God's face in vain.

It was some little time before the humiliating doctrine of original sin could be fully received by him: he could acknowledge and see many imperfections; much left undone which ought to have been done, and done which ought not to be done: but he could not see the heart of all men to be corrupt and at enmity against God, as stated in Rom. viii. 7; and that, while a difference in natural disposition may render one amiable, and another unamiable; or that, from a distinction in our various stations in life, seeds of corruption ripen into action, differing according to our various situations of temptation; yet that the same seeds are in the heart of all mankind, and that all are totally corrupt in the sight of God.

Such were his mistaken views of the real state of the human heart. Oh that all under similar delusions, would but pursue similar means to satisfy themselves! they would then soon, like him, be brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light.

After every conversation upon these subjects, which generally terminated in prayer, it was his habit, when left by himself, to try, with the most persevering assiduity, to find passages in Scripture to corroborate the statements which had been made to him.

He was forcibly struck with the humiliating description of human nature in the first and third chapters of the epistle to the Romans, where both Jew and Gentile are said to be under sin; and that "there is none righteous, no, not one." The more he searched, the more were his eyes opened to the plain statement of man's sinful, and consequently lost state by nature. He found it written in Gal. iii. 22, that the Scripture hath concluded all under sin. and in 1 John v. 19, that "the whole world lieth in wickedness." These and similar passages now spoke to him in a language so convincing, that he found himself unconsciously making the exclamation, "Lord! what must I do to be saved?"

Our farmer sought, and he found the answer to his prayer: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

This led him to experience that to which he was before an utter stranger,—the difficulty of believing. Hitherto he had looked upon his belief as a matter of course, the existence of which he had never questioned: now, when he saw himself a condemned sinner before God, and his former ease and indifference, arising from ignorance of his danger, were exchanged for the most painful alarm for his soul's safety, the consciousness of his unbelief became evident to him. "Whence all these doubts and fears?" was the question he continually put to himself: "come they not of unbelief? for the word of God is not more plain in describing man's lost state, than it is in pointing to the remedy, that all who believe shall be saved." Then the prayer of the man in the gospel was adopted as his own, "Lord, I (would) believe; help thou mine unbelief."

His state of mind at this time was one of great uneasiness and suspense: he might be almost said, like Abraham, to "hope against hope." He said one day to his minister, "I cannot find the peace and joy which you and other christians speak of; but you assure me I shall do so, and the word of God gives me the same encouragement: I will therefore persevere." He said at this time, "I seem to be in a new world: every thing wears a new aspect:

my thoughts seem wholly occupied on subjects which formerly never crossed my mind; or, if they did, it was only in pity or contempt of those who were engrossed by them. Every thing appears a mystery to me; I am a mystery to myself: the great change I find in myself, is to me unaccountable; it can be only the Spirit of God who can have produced it.

He has often asserted that on Mr E.'s first visit to his son, that sentence addressed to Zaccheus, forcibly and repeatedly occurred to his mind, "This day is salvation come to this house," though he had no recollection of ever before noticing the expression; and he loved to revert to that day, as the one on which he was first awakened to a sense of danger from the indwelling of original sin.

On the following Lord's day, on leaving church, he accosted a neighbouring farmer with whom he had been on terms of closest intimacy, and, with all the warmth of one newly awakened to spiritual life, he at once began speaking on the subject nearest his heart. "Do you know, neighbour, I have lately been led to see that you and I have all our lives been going the wrong road: Mr. E. says it is no use our just going to church in the morning, as you and I have done all our lives, and not thinking any more about the matter all he rest of the day, or all the week, till Sunday comes round again; but, he says, that we must be born again of the Spirit of God; that is, have his Spirit in our hearts, and that will make us see what sinners we are in the sight of a holy God; and that it is not anything *we* can do will take us to heaven, but that it is only by our believing in Jesus Christ."

The surprise of the neighbour was very great at hearing this appeal: it was only equalled by our good old farmer's at finding that the appeal was made in vain; and, notwithstanding the clearness with which he had represented their companionship in error, he was not listened to, neither was any desire expressed to hear any more upon the subject.

Our farmer was much pained at this, and now perceived, for the first time in his life, how powerful an anxiety was awakened in his heart, not only for his own, but also for the souls of others. Natural feeling will produce much care, even great self-denial for the temporal welfare of those around us, but it is grace alone awakens an anxiety for their souls. Our farmer felt that, had he expressed an opinion to his neighbour on any worldly topic with half the earnestness he

had shown about religion, that his representation would have been listened to, and his advice followed; and he could not account for such insensibility as to the concerns of the soul. He forgot, that only a few weeks before, he was himself in a similar state of natural darkness, and had yet to learn, that such a state is in Scripture emphatically termed "a state of death," as being dead to God, and spiritual things.

Each day was now marked by some evidence of the Spirit's work within. He was supplied with several books of practical piety; and, on reading one of them, "Baxter's Plain Man's Guide to Heaven," he requested six copies might be procured for him, that he might give one to each of his children. "They have seen me all their lives," he said, "toiling for their worldly prosperity: they shall now, with the blessing of God, see me equally anxious for their spiritual welfare."

His awakened spirit was now filled with care for the souls of all around him; and, instead of finishing his sabbaths, as formerly, in drinking and smoking, or looking over his farming accounts, he invited all his cottagers to assemble in his kitchen in the evening; where, after prayer to the Father of mercies, who had thus called him at the eleventh hour, he read to them a sermon which had been previously selected by his minister.

After pursuing this course regularly for several sabbaths, he expressed a wish to assemble his workpeople occasionally on a week-day, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures to them, adding with great simplicity and humility, "But perhaps, Sir, I had better wait till the beam is more out of my own eye, before I go on too fast in helping my neighbours." Mr E. well knew that while the Spirit is at work within, that is the time to act upon His suggestions, and that nothing more promotes the growth of grace in ourselves, than striving to be useful to others: he therefore recommended the immediate adoption of the proposed plan under similar arrangements to the Sunday-evening readings, and, to encourage him, offered to preside at the first meeting.

There were upwards of forty workpeople present, of both sexes, and all ages, from the hoary-headed shepherd down to the flaxen-headed plough-boy, whose quiet demeanour showed the imposing effect which a meeting for religious purposes seldom fails to produce on the most unlettered.

The spacious kitchen was well adapted to the purpose

The polished substantial oak table stood in the middle: on it was placed a large Bible, and a few of the Cottage Hymn-books. Three rows of benches were placed for the labourers, and some chairs for the family, at the head of whom, our farmer was an object of peculiar interest: his tall thin figure, and silvery head, and quick expressive eye, beaming with humility, love, and gratitude, could not be contemplated with indifference. The pious cottager was not an unmoved spectator of this scene; and, when he contrasted it with those he had formerly witnessed on this same spot, and recollected how often he had mourned in secret over his generous master living year after year the slave of sin and Satan, his heart now bounded with joy at this instance of the power of grace, and, while tears of delight rolled down his weather-beaten face, the involuntary exclamation burst from his lips, "Blessed be God, that I have lived to see this day!" The Rev. Mr. E. on this occasion officiated, according to his promise; and, after devoutly imploring a blessing on the purpose for which they had met, and reading and expounding a few verses from the first part of the second chapter of Ephesians, he gave out a verse of a hymn, in which all voices joined. Then, after again beseeching at a throne of grace the life-giving influence of the Holy Spirit, to bless these feeble attempts for the promotion of his glory, this little band separated, and returned to their homes.

It will readily be imagined that such proceedings soon proclaimed to the world the change that had taken place in the heart of our farmer, and various efforts were made by his old associates, both by argument and raillery, to draw him back to his former habits. A neighbouring farmer, of some wealth and influence, one day accosted him in the public market-street: "Why, they tell me you are grown quite a hypocrite, that you are ate up with religion; and that there is nothing but praying and preaching now going on at your house;" raising his voice gradually as he spoke, till the attention of several were drawn to the spot, some joining in the laugh against our farmer, and others turning towards him, with a sneer on the lip.

Our farmer had at first a feeling of false shame at this unexpected and open attack; but it was only momentary: the word of God was his shield; and his own simple account was, "That sentence came to my mind, 'Whoso-

ever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in his glory:' and I took courage, and, blessed be God, I had not one angry feeling on being called a hypocrite, though I am sure a few months back, I would not have taken such an accusation from any man; but I can laugh at it now: and I told my friend I could not certainly accuse him of hypocrisy in his blunt mode of accosting me." He added, "I longed to say I am not half so much ate up with religion as I have been all my life with sin; but I feared to provoke some sneer against religion, and only said, 'You and I have passed many a night together in drinking, gaming, and swearing, which we thought to be happiness: but I have discovered my error, and can assure you, I never knew happiness till I found it in religion. That which we formerly mistook for it, I now see, was mere delusion; and, as I have now tried both sources, and you only one, I must be the best judge; and I cannot therefore be laughed out of what I now know from experience to be the most effectual." This manly avowal of his religious sentiments blunted the arrow of ridicule with which he had been assailed; and he felt, he had the 'vantage ground.

On the following day when noticing this incident, he produced an old farming memorandum-book, whose sable edges showed it had long been his pocket companion, scribbled over in all directions with market-prices, weights of corn, &c. &c.: the business of this world had hitherto solely occupied its pages; one clean leaf was, however, now appropriated to the subject nearest his heart, and he pointed to several texts he had looked out, that he might, as he said, "have them handy to refer to at the next market-day, should he be again attacked." Many market-days have since passed by, but no further attempt has been made to turn him from his purpose. Oh! that many would take a lesson from this farmer, old in years, but young in grace: they would find, as he did, the value of firmness in the cause of Christ, and that it is the most effectual method to stay the torrent of temptation with which the world will always distress the unstable and the undecided.

He often spoke with gratitude and astonishment at the goodness and forbearance of God in not taking him out of life during so many years of obstinate rebellion against him adding, "I see plainly it is to God's mercy alone I am

indebted that I am not in hell: he has, indeed, called me at the eleventh hour."

His anxiety for the souls of all around was one of the strongest testimonies of his great change. He was very desirous that a neighbour should read a sermon which had been useful to himself explaining the vision of the dry bones, published by the Religious Tract Society: the neighbour declared he had a great aversion to tracts, and would not read one; on which our farmer, though not much accustomed to writing, copied it throughout, and then sent t to his neighbour, who, not recognising in the manuscript sermon the tract he had rejected, took it and read it.

He at this time purchased a collection of books and cards that the children of his workpeople might be taught to read, and they were assembled twice a week in his kitchen for that purpose under the superintendence of his daughter.

It is not to be supposed that Farmer B. was forgotten by Satan: there were times when he was harassed with temptations which distressed him, almost to agony; but he always came off victorious because he always sought help where alone it can be found. A striking instance of one of these struggles occurred on one of the days his workpeople were to assemble for the Scripture readings. He entered his daughter's room, who was ill in bed, and with a countenance full of distress told her, he really could not assemble them that evening, or indeed ever again; for he had been walking in the fields, and was there led to consider his late change as all delusion, that he had been a great hypocrite, that, after living so many years in rebellion against God, there could not now be any forgiveness for him, and that it was presumption for such a sinner as him, to attempt to read the word of God to others. It had pleased the Father of mercies to awaken this daughter to spiritual life, at the very same period with her aged father, and the rapid growth of grace, and firm faith of this beloved child had often been a stimulus and encouragement to her father; and never was her timely aid more useful than on this occasion. She was rapidly approaching the last stage of a decline; but she now, with all the energy her wasted frame would allow, raised herself in bed, and entreated her father not for another moment to suffer Satan thus to triumph. "Who, my dear father," she asked, "has led you to see yourself a sinner unworthy of

mercy? None other, as you well know, than Christ himself has thus opened your eyes. And who has suggested that you are past the reach of mercy? is it not our great enemy? and will you listen to his suggestions, rather than the invitations of the blessed Saviour, who holds out forgiveness to the vilest? O go this instant, implore his pardon for having parleyed with the enemy for only these few minutes, and do not increase the sin by any longer delay." He left her, and retired to his chamber: in about a quarter of an hour he returned to her room, and affectionately took her hand: he said not a word, but his calm and composed manner told her that all within was again peace. The enemy had made an attempt to regain his former dwelling, but One stronger than he had taken possession, and bad defiance to his return.

It now pleased the Lord gradually to give him the full assurance of his love, and that for Christ's sake, he had obtained the forgiveness of all his sins. It was soon after the above incident he said, "I have a feeling within which seems to make it impossible for me to doubt: I hope I am not presumptuous; if you think I am, pray tell me; but I am so full of love to God, and joy, I cannot express my feelings, for a long time." He added, "I persevered, through God's help, because you told me I should find joy, and now I find you were right. Oh that all my old companions would but seek God, and obtain enjoyment, such as mine!"

It must be observed he did not attain to this state of assurance and joy till he had for some time diligently persevered in every means of grace, both public and private.

We have the promise in Scripture, that we shall not be tempted above what we are able to bear. Our Lord himself, in his human nature, experienced an especial out-pouring of the Spirit immediately previous to his temptation in the wilderness, as if to support and strengthen him in that trying hour, and it has been the observation of many an experienced christian that a season of unusual joy in the Lord, or being able in an especial manner to realize the presence of his Holy Spirit in the heart, has often preceded some severe temptation, or heavy domestic calamity or sharp affliction under some form or other. Our farmer was a strong exemplification of this remark; for it pleased the Lord at this his first season of spiritual rejoicing, to try him, by the death of the daughter before alluded to.

To the eye of man, the life of this endeared child seemed important to the spiritual growth of the parent; but God seeth not as man seeth. He will wrest from us all creature dependencies, on which we are so apt to lean, to show us their insufficiency, and lead us to see that it is to himself alone we must look for spiritual strength, and we shall then find him a very present help in time of need. Trying as was the dispensation, the bereaved parent was enabled, through grace, to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." And although, on turning from the grave, he wept in very bitterness of heart at thus losing sight of her mortal remains, yet, even in that moment of agony, there was mixed a feeling of holy, of spiritual joy, while he contemplated her as already with her Saviour in glory; and, addressing a friend at the side of the grave, he said, "According to the course of nature, but few more suns can rise and set ere I shall rejoin her."

It may be, that when he thus spoke of his own few remaining days, he scarcely thought they were to be so limited. Within thirteen months from that period, he was laid by her side in the same silent tomb, and doubtless is now realizing that happiness in eternity, to which he looked forward on turning from her grave.

The prevailing epidemic at the end of 1836 and beginning of 1837 was the immediate cause of his death. From the period the Saviour was first made known to him, he had uniformly persevered in his christian course Although actively engaged in large farming concerns, yet the great change which had taken place in him, was evident to every one, and that Saviour whom he so unhesitatingly followed, did not forsake him in the hour of need. His last sickness was but of few days' duration, when his strength was all employed in speaking of the great love of his Saviour in sparing him till he had made himself known to him. To a friend who inquired, "Is Christ precious to you?" He said, "He is my all in all: I can trust wholly in him;" and, with as much energy as his strength would allow, he repeated two verses of the hymn, "There is a fountain fill'd with blood." To another christian friend who unexpectedly entered, he, immediately on seeing her began another hymn which they had often read together:

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;"

but here his strength failed, and he could proceed no further. He seemed much refreshed and very grateful for the prayers of his revered clerical friend, whom he had long regarded with peculiar attachment as the instrument in the hands of God of leading him to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus: nearly his last expression to him was, "Oh the blessing of having found a Saviour!"

His salutation to a near relative who arrived from a considerable distance about two hours before his death, was, "Jesus Christ came to save sinners," and "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." He shortly after desired prayer to be offered up for him, and, repeating the words, "My Saviour! my Saviour!" died almost without a struggle.

On the Lord's day, after consigning him to the tomb, the Rev. Mr. E. took for his text Rom. viii. 1. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" stating that this portion of Scripture was one on which the departed loved to dwell, and which had communicated to his soul joy and peace.

May this instance of the power of Divine grace be an encouragement to those who are still in their natural, their unregenerate state, to seek its influence while yet the door of mercy is open. And let not those who have begun to seek the Lord be disheartened at not immediately experiencing all the peace and joy they had anticipated; but, following the example of our christian farmer, may they be encouraged, like him, to persevere; for so, like him, "in due time they shall reap, if they faint not."

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Considerable Allowance to Subscribers and Booksellers.

OLD GEARING.

BY THE

REV. JOSEPH SORTAIN, A.B.

Old Gearing died on the first of September, 1836, aged 78. He was one of the oldest members of my congregation, and during the last five years, in consequence of his extreme poverty and helplessness, had become an object of my particular attention. Generally speaking, I dislike and avoid preaching funeral sermons; but I loved this poor old man so warmly, and felt such an admiration of his character, that, with the hope of doing good, especially to the poor of my congregation, I made his case an exception. Two or three facts of Old Gearing's life I have now thrown into the simpler form of a tract, with the earnest prayer that the example which it exhibits, of true religion overcoming the evils of vice and poverty, may find many imitators.

"Old Gearing," as he was familiarly called by his friends and neighbours, was the most remarkable instance I ever witnessed in which true piety triumphed over want, by giving the sufferer resignation,—triumphed over previous ignorance, by enlightening even the intellect,—triumphed over gross and low habits, by giving the high-minded purity and integrity of religion. We look with wonder at that skill of man, which can collect a mass of iron ore, and, by a variety of means, separate the dross and refine the metal, and at last produce from it the polished, sharp, glistening sword. I have often thought of a greater change when I have been sitting talking with Old Gearing. How frequently have I heard him say, whilst tears of contrition ran down his cheeks: "Sir, I was for years a brute; brutal to my wife, brutal to my children, brutal to my neighbours. I was the terror of all who knew me. I never spoke but I swore. Until I was more than

fifty years old, I had never been in a church, I had never read a verse in the Bible. I had taken a most awful oath, that, if not oftener, at least every Saturday night, I would, by fair means or foul, get drunk." Such a description as this he has often given me of himself. And this was not the language of canting, mock humility: it was the truth. Even now there are persons in Brighton who knew him then, and who almost shudder at the recollection: he was so bad. Now let me tell you what he became; and, if I can prove to you by facts that this poor old man was so changed that he was one of the most kind, and gentle, and loving, and temperate; and if all this took place solely through the influence of Christ's holy gospel, will you not adore the Divine power which effected so surprising a change?

Old Gearing had been for many years a sailor in the royal navy. In an action with the enemy he lost a leg, and was dismissed the service, with a pension. That pension, together with the small profits arising from chopping wood for firing, formed the entire support of himself, a wife, and several children. Of course, during the summer, when but little wood for fire was wanted, he had scarcely anything but the pension, and that but barely paid his rent. A sailor, a cripple, who had never learned a trade, could not, as another active man, get different sorts of work; and, in consequence, he was often very near starvation. One day, (and, were it wise, I could name the very persons whom the fact I am about to relate concerns,)—one day a lady in Brighton received from a benevolent friend a small sum of money to distribute among the poor. She went near the alley where Gearing and his wife were living, and inquired of a respectable person in the neighbourhood if he knew any deserving objects of charity amongst the poor around. He immediately directed her to Gearing's home, and assured her of his extreme want. She went: she offered him a small sum; but the kind Christian old man modestly declined the gratuity, telling her that there were several families in the alley (mentioning them) in much greater distress than himself. The lady returned to the shop, and, on stating the circumstance, was assured that that very day potato-rinds, which had been thrown away by others into the common

ash-hole, were, when cleaned and boiled, the only food for Old Gearing's and his wife's dinner. This fact happened before my residence in Brighton, but I have had it authenticated. Here was, indeed, "deep poverty abounding unto the riches of liberality," 2 Cor. viii. 2.

What a contrast was old Gearing then, to old Gearing some years before! If during his days of brutality to his wife and children, and his habits of drunkenness this lady had gone to his house and offered him the same sum, would he have declined it? Would he have thought of his poor neighbours? Would he not, rather, as soon as the lady had turned her back, have gone to the ale house to squander it all away, deaf to his children's cries for bread, and laughing at some neighbours who in the next house were pale and wan from hunger? He would, for he had often done worse, more cruel things than this.

But God's holy word had been the means of changing his heart. He would say, "Did our blessed Saviour so love poor sinners as to give up all, even life, for me, and shall I be selfish? Shall I not love others, and give up as much as I can for them?" Thus he used to reason.

But there is another more than ordinary instance of the power of the gospel on his conduct, which I would mention. We all know that a confirmed drunkard is an almost hopeless being In besieging a town there is often a company of soldiers who volunteer to make the first assault; and then death is so very probable that they are called "the forlorn hope." Drunkards are the "forlorn hope" amongst sinners rushing to ruin. Perhaps, more than any other men, they make resolutions, and often very sincere ones too: still, so mighty is the love of liquor, that it overcomes them all. The drunkard, when a sober man in the morning, and awake to his folly, seeing the nakedness, and filth, and misery his intemperance has brought to sit by his fireside, determines to be intemperate no more. But this "goodness is as a morning cloud," which we have often seen divide itself into soft, fleecy streaks, and at last vanish away. But Gearing was an extraordinary exception. I have said that he had made an awful oath, that, by fair means or foul he would get drunk every Saturday night

of his life: and, for many a sad year of that life, he kept his vow. Many a Sunday morning has he been found lying dead drunk in the kennel. What became of him when the gospel of Jesus Christ touched his heart? He made no vow, for he was afraid lest he should break it, he so felt his weakness: but he resolved, praying God to help him, that he would never drink any beer, or wine, or spirits again. He was laughed at, but he was firm. His false appetite craved for liquor, and for many a month made him wretched, but he would not yield. For one-and-twenty years he never drank anything but pure water from the spring, or a little tea. In his last illness, when I told him I would send him some little delicacies, though his poor mouth was in such acute pain that he could barely utter a sound, he seized me by the hand and muttered, "Put no wine—no wine." He shuddered at the recollection of the power which drunkenness once had over him, and, with a sailor's strong imagination, he thought it a possession of the devil.

Here again, then, was the mighty influence of the gospel: it reformed him. How did it accomplish this great change? By reasoning with him merely? By its telling him that "no drunkard hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God?" Alas! he had been often reasoned with before: his wife's misery, his own, his children's—all these had reasoned with him, but to no purpose. And conscience, as he has frequently told me, often assured him that, by following such a course, he would be damned: but conscience warned him to no purpose. How then did the gospel reform him?

His wife had been taken very ill. Every one thought that she was dying. A pious lady visited her in her sickness, and, whilst Old Gearing was standing at the bedside, torn with remorse at his past cruelty and his wife's wretchedness, in spite of his dogged resolution not to listen to her, this kind visiter told them both that it was "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. She likewise told them that God called them to reason with him, saying, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isa. i. 18. This cut poor Gearing to the

heart. Rough sailor though he was, he could not stand against kindness—God's love to sinners! to the chief! His wife recovered, and they both went to a place of worship on the next Sunday. They went again and again. Meanwhile both earnestly prayed for pardon: and when Old Gearing found that God had given up his Son to save sinners, and that Christ had shed his blood for them, he looked on Him whom he had pierced, and was in bitterness. It was impossible for him not to love in grateful return. "What wilt thou have me to do?" Acts ix. 6. was very soon his anxious question: and thus, what neither reason nor conscience could effect before, "love to Christ" did: it bound him to Christ's blessed laws: and, instead of cruelty, and selfishness, and drunkenness, he brought forth "fruits meet for repentance," Matt. iii. 8.

All these are positive, unvarnished facts. How then can we, without any cant, any absurd enthusiasm, account for them? It is not every poor, cruel, drunken man, who hears the same holy truths, who, in consequence, exhibits the same improvement of character. Many, instead of yielding to their blessed influence, laugh them to scorn. Must not something have been added to what old Gearing heard, some power which made them of such energy in his heart? Are we not, by common sense and reason, compelled to admit that it was God's Holy Spirit who used these truths as instruments whereby to make him feel? Pray, then, do not despise such a doctrine as is contained in those words of Holy Scripture, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. ii. 1. —"Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 3, 5. Refer to your Bibles, and you will see these passages actually there. And was not Gearing an instance of "being quickened from a death in trespasses and sins?" Was it not like a resurrection from the grave? The work, therefore, was God's and God's alone. My reader, have you not heard the same truths which Gearing heard? if so, have you prayed that God's blessed Spirit would by them change you? for, though you may not have to undergo such an outward alteration as was necessary in his case, the language is universal: "Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

As I observed before, I saw a great deal of this dear old man during the last five years of his life; and I found that religion had not only changed his outward conduct, but had wrought a wonderful refinement in his feelings. He was very rough, very weather-beaten, and quite an old English tar in his appearance. But he was as tender and as delicate to another's feelings—he was as able and as inclined to "weep with those that wept, and to rejoice with those that rejoiced," Rom. xii. 15—he was as polite and respectful to his superiors as if, instead of having suffered from the rude society of a man of war, he had enjoyed all the kindly influences of a gentle and holy education. This was not from natural meekness of character. We have seen what he was. But this rugged old man, in displaying towards others this loveliness, became like the leopard lying down with the kid, and the wolf dwelling with the lamb, Isaiah xi. 6.

I do not wish to assert that religion always does so much as this for all true Christian people. I am sorry that some keep their bearishness through life; but it is only because they have not enough of religion: it is not religion's fault.

I can only explain this beautiful feature in Gearing's mind by considering that he held habitual intercourse with God. He who lives with a feeling that he is always in God's presence must grow in refinement, and in tenderness. We all know a man from the company he keeps. If his friends are rude, gross, cruel, drunken, we have a right to think he is rude, and gross, and cruel, and drunken too. What must a man then become, how very lowly, how very tender, how very pure, who daily "walks with God!" There is the greatest difference between a man who lives in and breathes the damp, foggy, unwholesome air of a mine, and another man who breathes the pure air of the mountain top, and sees the morning blushing at the sun.

Oh! what a lovely picture was Old Gearing! If you had gone with me on a Saturday afternoon, (for I always chose that time, just before Sunday, in order that I might obtain a holy feeling for my public duty,) to Gearing's house in the little alley, you would have seen a wrinkled old man, a few hoary hairs combed straight upon his forehead, and very uncouth in his appearance; but soon some passage of Scripture I might mention to him or some reflection, called

up a bright smile, and his grey eye, generally heavy and dull, would twinkle with fire; through his little lattice he would look, as if to meet a vision of his heavenly Father in the pure sky, his own homely hut not being, as he considered, suitable for the Divine Presence; and then, thus enkindled, you would hear from him some fine thought, though in homely language, and you would say, "This is the gate of heaven!"

During last winter, by some strokes of the palsy, he was reduced to a most pitiable bodily condition. And then, in addition to his pain of body, he was distressed with thoughts of his past life. He trusted not in his reformation of twenty-five years for salvation. But this struggle of soul was mercifully shortened; and in my final interview with him, he, who had been almost riven with temptation, said to me, "This is my hope:—'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil,'" 1 John iii. 8.

He had been able to walk out to hear my Thursday evening's lecture, and was just starting on the following day to the address preparatory to the Sunday's sacrament, when a fit of palsy seized him, and in a few minutes he was dead.

What a change was this to the dear old man! "Absent from the body, he was present with the Lord," 2 Cor. v. 8. His poor little hut was given up for one of the mansions of his "Father's house:" his pains and sorrows "for joys unutterable:" his wants "for the fulness of God."

My reader, I have submitted to you these facts, with the earnest hope they may impress you with the value of true religion. I am as great an enemy to cant and hypocrisy as you may be; but such religion as this I cannot but admire. Shall not you and I, then, seek it for ourselves? Shall we not pray, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me?" Psa. li. 10. Say not, I beseech you, "It was all very well for so bad a man as Old Gearing once was, thus to be talked to." You and I need the very same mercy of God, to alter our affections and our thoughts, if not our outward behaviour. Until we have sought for pardon through Jesus Christ, we are in just as much peril as he once was. Oh, have you sought

it? If you have not, will you? "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 6.

Should this tract fall into the hands of any one whose cultivated mind and moral habits form a perfect contrast to those which once marked Old Gearing, I would beg him to bethink how mighty must that power be, and how elevating its influence, which not only humanized but dignified its subject! The text of my funeral sermon for him was taken from the book of Proverbs, "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour," Prov. xii. 26; and my object was to prove, that, whatever the righteous man may be as respects the circumstances of his life, and whatever his unrighteous neighbour may be as to the events of his life—the one however poor, and mean, and untaught—the other however wealthy, and respected, and refined—if true piety is in the one and absent from the other, the former must be more excellent than the latter. And this excellence includes, not merely moral worth, but worth of all kinds. Its possessor is richer, is better cultivated, is better taught, and has more power. He is richer; for he has that specie which can procure more solid pleasure. He has more refinement; for he has the possession of the reality of excellence, whilst the other has only its outward expression. He has the results of a better intellect; for he hath the truths of God for his rudiments of knowledge. He hath more power; since God, the Omnipotent, is "for him." The one is genuine coin of the king's realm the moment before it hath its superscription; the other is base though well-dyed metal. The one is the marble block, full of veins beautiful and varied, but as yet unchiselled; the other is some worthless plaster for a time moulded into elegance and form.

How thankful shall I be to Almighty God if this simple narrative shall convince any one of the truth of this position; if it shall not only awaken in some mind a higher estimate of genuine godliness, but enkindle a fervent desire after its personal possession!

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Considerable Allowance to Subscribers and Booksellers.

ROZIE.

BY A MISSIONARY.

ABOUT the year 1813, when the writer was labouring as a missionary at B—— in the East Indies, a black man, who was called Rozie, came there with H. M. 69th regiment. He was attached to the band, and was employed to beat the long drum, and sometimes the tambourine. Rozie was born in the West Indies. His parents were both slaves from Africa, and he had spent his youth in slavery. By some means or other, he found his way to England; there he enlisted, and came out with the regiment to India.

When Rozie came to B——, he was a very profligate character, notorious for intemperance, and every thing that was vile. Often had he been punished for his evil doings, and many had been the efforts which had been made by his officers to reform him, but in vain; he appeared quite incorrigible. At that time an English service was held on the Sabbath and Wednesday evenings for the benefit of the soldiers, (they having then no chaplain,) in a large school-room belonging to the mission, and some of the men, having become serious, were allowed the privilege of meeting there on the other evenings of the week for social prayer. One Sabbath evening Rozie observing a number of his comrades flocking to the school-room, he thought he also would go: he accompanied them, and though his knowledge of the English language was but imperfect, his attention was fixed; his conscience was awakened, and the word was brought home with power and efficacy to his heart. The big tears were seen to trickle down his sable cheeks, and he returned to his barracks, not to sing, and dance, and swear, and make sport for his comrades as heretofore, but to mourn over his sins, and pray for mercy.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799;
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The next morning Rozie came to the mission house, and having asked to see me, he said, "O sir, last night me hear you preach in school-room; de word touch my heart, and make me cry; O sir, me sinner, me great sinner; me too much drink, me too much swear, me very, very bad man; sir, what must me do to be saved?" He was told of the great mercy of God to sinners; he was directed to Jesus the Friend of sinners, who came to seek and to save the lost; and it was said to him as to the trembling jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts xvi. 31. He was enabled to believe in, and to love the Saviour, and to give up himself to Him, and from that day became an altered man. His former companions were forsaken, his old inveterate habits were broken off, the drunkard became sober, and the swearer a man of prayer. In a word, he became "a new creature," old things were passed away, and all things became new, 2 Cor. v. 17. The change was so great and so marvellous, that it was noticed not only by his comrades but by his officers; and some who did not much love the gospel, could not but confess that it had produced a wonderful change for the better in Rozie. Many attempts were made to draw him back again to the world and sin, but in vain; while many of his English comrades disappointed our hopes, and returned again to folly, Rozie, strengthened from above, stood firm, and through Divine grace became as eminent for sobriety, Christian simplicity, and piety, as he had been before for profligacy and sin.

About two years after his conversion, Rozie was removed with the regiment to Bangalore, where I saw him in 1817. From thence he was removed to Cannamore, where I saw him again in 1822, and I was rejoiced to find him holding on his way in the narrow path, and maintaining the character of a humble consistent disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. During his abode in these places, I received from him many letters: he could not write himself, but used to get one of his comrades to write for him, while he always supplied the matter. His letters were in his own simple style, always interesting, full of gratitude to God, and love to his minister, and the Christian friends at B——.

Whether Rozie is still living or not, I am uncertain. The last time I saw him was in 1835, at a station some hundreds of miles from B——. He was then advanced in life, and had for several years retired from military service

on a small pension. His conversation was as pious, cheerful, and lovely as ever. He parted with me with much feeling, commending me to God, and expressing his hope that we should soon meet again in heaven to part no more. The accounts I received of him from Christian friends at the station, afforded the most pleasing evidence that he was still holding on his way, walking with God, and adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour.

That poor and oppressed portion of the human family to which Rozie belongs, has been supposed by some to be so degraded, and so wanting in mental energy, as to be incapable of improvement, and unworthy of the efforts of Christian philanthropy; but, in addition to the numerous proofs which have been adduced to the contrary, the history of Rozie affords the most convincing evidence that, under the influence of Divine grace, the poor despised negro is capable of attaining to the highest eminence in every thing that is good and holy. As an additional proof of this, and hoping that the exhibition of such a character to the world may glorify God, and prove useful to men, I have been induced to give this account of Rozie. There are a few points in this good man's character which I would especially notice, and hold up to professing Christians as worthy of their imitation. These are

1. His gratitude and love to his God and Saviour.

I do not remember scarcely ever to have entered into a conversation with Rozie, in which he did not advert to the miserable and degraded state in which the gospel found him, and the wonderful grace and mercy of God in delivering him from that sad condition. The Saviour was very precious to him, and he spent much of his time in thinking and speaking of his love. At our prayer-meetings he was often called upon to pray, and my heart has been frequently melted by hearing him, in his broken English, pour forth at the throne of grace the grateful affectionate feelings of his soul; tears at the same time pouring from his eyes.

2. Great was his attachment to the house of God, and the means of grace.

When military duty did not prevent, Rozie was seldom or ever absent either from prayer-meeting or from preaching. To him a day in the courts of the Lord was better than a thousand elsewhere. He could say, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after that I may

dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," Psa. xxvii. 4. Some time after his conversion, he had occasion to wait upon one of his officers, who lived near the school-room where Rozie first heard the gospel: the officer having very frequently observed Rozie going there, said to him, "Rozie, how is it I now see you going so often to that school-room? Why do you go there so much?" "O sir," said Rozie, "me love dat school-room; me love dat school room very much." "Why do you love that school-room so much?" "O sir, me was born dere." "You were born there!" said the officer, "you were born there! what do you mean, man? You were born in the West Indies." "O sir," replied Rozie, "me not mean dat born; me mean de second born." "The second born!" cried the officer, "why, what do you mean? I cannot understand you." Poor Rozie meekly replied, "You no understand, sir, de second born? You never read, sir, what Jesus Christ say to Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God?' John iii. 3; dat, sir, de born me mean."

Reader, do you thus love the house of God? Do you know by happy experience what is meant by the second birth? This Rozie had experienced to his joy; and even the place where this gracious change in his heart had been effected was precious to him. O remember, the lip of eternal truth has declared that without this change you cannot enter into the kingdom of God. O read, and pray, and ponder over the solemn declarations of the Saviour respecting this necessary, this all-important change, as recorded in John iii. 1—8.

3. Another trait in the character of Rozie, which appears worthy of notice, was, his affectionate attachment to his minister. During the two years of his continuance at B——, after his conversion, he was continually watching for opportunities of manifesting his esteem and love to him who had been the instrument of his conversion to God. Rozie was an ingenious, active, and useful man, and could turn his hand to anything that was useful. He could not only beat the drum, and play on the tambourine, he could also shave, and cut hair; and after his conversion, he insisted upon being barber to the mission family, and never could he be persuaded to receive anything for his services. On one occasion when four of my own children and ten

or twelve of the children in the mission-school were ill with the measles, Rozie saw it was a time of trouble with us, and he came and begged to be allowed to stay with us for a time, to assist in nursing them.

Some time after Rozie's removal to Bangalore, I visited that station on my way to Seringapatam, during one of my missionary tours. During the fortnight I remained there, an officer of Rozie's regiment with whom I was staying had a large tent pitched in his campound, (garden,) in which I daily met the soldiers and natives, and others who came to confer with me on religious subjects. Rozie was with me as often and as much as he could; and when I was about to proceed on my journey, he was exceedingly anxious to assist in providing for me such necessaries as were wanted for my comfort on the road; he therefore said to me, "Now, sir, you going forward, what can me get for you." I replied, "I believe, Rozie, I have every thing provided that I need." "O, sir," said he, much concerned, "me must get something for you; have you got tea?" "Yes, Rozie." "Have you coffee? Have you plenty biscuit?" and he mentioned several other things which travellers in India are obliged to carry with them. I replied, "Yes, Rozie, I have all." "O, sir," said he, "me must get you someting: what can me get for you?" He sat down for a few moments, apparently in deep thought, and then suddenly springing up, he ran down the garden into the town. What had come into his mind, and why he had thus abruptly left me, I could not conjecture; but in a short time I beheld him skipping up the garden, joy beaming in his countenance, with something in his hand covered with a napkin. Entering the tent, he put down upon the table a fine large plum-cake. "Here, sir," said he, "me got for you one cake; dis be good ting for you in your journey: and when you eat dis cake, you tink poor Rozie."

About five years after this, during another missionary tour to the western coast, in passing through an extensive jungle, I was seized with a dangerous fever, and was carried into Tellicherry in a state of delirium. Rozie was then with his regiment at Cannamore, about 14 miles from Tellicherry. On hearing of my affliction he hastened to his commanding officer, stated the sad tidings he had heard of his minister, as he always called me, and begged for liberty to go and see me. It was granted, and he hastened

to me, and never shall I forget his tears, and the expressions of sympathy and affection which he uttered when he saw my afflicted state. He tarried with me as long as his pass port would allow, and would have staid and nursed me till my recovery, could he have obtained leave. It pleased God so far to restore me as to enable me in a few weeks to visit Cannamore, and preach to the soldiers there; and words cannot express the joy which the grateful Rozie manifested in seeing me once more amongst them, and in the enjoyment of health.

Christian reader, do you, like poor Rozie, esteem and honour your minister for his Master's and for his work's sake? And do you, by your prayers, and by every other means in your power, endeavour to help him, to encourage him, and to strengthen his hands in the work of the Lord? Oh, did all professing Christians love their ministers, pray for their ministers, and do all they can to help them, as did Rozie, how different would be the circumstances of many a faithful ambassador of Christ!

4. Rozie not only loved his minister and his God, but his Christian benevolence and love extended to all his fellow men.

Though he was often persecuted on account of his religion, and ridiculed because he was a poor black, and had been a slave, yet he loved all men, and endeavoured as far as he could to do good to all, "especially to those who were of the household of faith," Gal. vi. 10. To a fund established by the pious soldiers of his regiment for the greater comfort of the sick in hospitals, Rozie was one of the largest contributors; and when he heard that any of the brethren were there, he was one of the first to visit them, and afford them help and consolation. And if any turned from the path of holiness, and dishonoured the Saviour, none were more grieved than he, or more diligent in endeavouring to lift up and restore the fallen brother. For poor careless sinners around him he felt much compassion, and would watch for opportunities of speaking to them about the things which belonged to their peace. He would try also to persuade them to accompany him to the house of God; and I believe there are several who will have to bless God through eternity for Rozie's kindness to them in this respect. Besides Rozie, there was another poor African in the band: Rozie had no sooner tasted of the bread and water of life himself than he

sought his poor countryman, and brought him to the house where he had found mercy; and there is good reason to believe, that he also was made a partaker of the same saving grace.

Rozie's humble, holy, and consistent life so wrought upon the minds of all around him, his officers, as well as his comrades, that he was greatly respected by all, and had much more influence than usually falls to the lot of those in his humble circumstances. One day he was engaged in cutting the hair of the major of the regiment, when one of his servants having offended him, he uttered an oath, Rozie was grieved, and after a moment's pause, he said, "Major, did you ever read the Swearer's Prayer?" "The Swearer's Prayer! the Swearer's Prayer!" replied the major, "what is that?" "One leetel book, sir, called de Swearer's Prayer; you never read it, sir?" "No, Rozie," said the officer. "You like to see it, sir?" "Yes, Rozie." The good man instantly put down his comb and scissors, and ran out to his little dwelling, which was near, and soon returned, putting the tract into his hand. The reproof was well received; and, though I cannot say it produced all the effect Rozie desired, there is reason to believe that it produced for some time a salutary influence on that officer's mind. Rozie always kept a supply of tracts about him, and watched for opportunities of giving them with advantage.

5. There was nothing Rozie appeared to fear so much as sin.

Previous to his conversion, the officers, when they employed him as barber, frequently paid him for such services with strong spirituous liquors, which he dearly loved, but after he became a Christian, if they did not choose to pay him in money, to avoid temptation, he would receive nothing at all. Intemperance had been his easily besetting sin; therefore he most carefully avoided every occasion of temptation. Though he had been formerly such a slave to this vice, I do not remember ever to have heard of his being overcome by it after he became a partaker of the grace of God. And not only did he pray, and watch, and strive against this sin, but I have reason to believe against every other. Having named the name of Jesus, and given up himself to his service, he was careful to depart from all iniquity, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1.

6. Rozie appeared remarkable for his spiritual-mindedness and deadness to the world.

Things holy and divine seemed to be always uppermost in his thoughts, and he was always ready to speak of them The glory and grace of the Saviour, and the blessedness of the heavenly world, were subjects on which he loved to dwell. His employment in the band of the regiment frequently obliged him to be present, and assist at public entertainments, balls, etc.; but for such engagements as these poor Rozie had no relish. I remember once to have asked him how he felt on such occasions. "O sir," said he, "while de ladies and gentlemens dance, and my fingers run over de tambourine, my heart often forget dem, and fly up to de Lord Jesus, and I tink only upon his love."

Reader, behold what the grace of God did for Rozie, and see whether or not you are a partaker of the same grace; and if not, O seek it without delay. Trifle not with convictions. Time is short: life is uncertain: death, judgment, and eternity are at hand. As soon as Rozie saw his guilt and danger, he cried for help: he sought for mercy, and he sought it not in vain. Imitate his example: flee to the same hiding-place, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Friend, the Saviour of sinners; the only refuge from "the wrath to come," Matt. iii. 7. He is as ready to receive you, as he was to receive Rozie, and by this tract invites thee to come to him. His atoning blood can wash away all thy sins, 1 John i. 7. His Holy Spirit can change and renew thy heart: can enable thee to overcome every evil propensity: can impart to thy soul the same holy, heavenly graces which he gave to Rozie, and fill thee with the same peace and joy in believing. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," Isa. lv. 6, 7.

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THE RUSSIAN NURSE

BY A MISSIONARY.

THE imperial city of St. Petersburg is one of the most magnificent in the world. Its spacious streets, and gilded spires, and numerous palaces, have a most imposing effect on strangers. The population is upwards of three hundred thousand. I lived among them thirteen years, and received nothing but kindness from every class of the community. People from the four quarters of the world come and settle there: some for pleasure, and others for trade: and it is a pleasing sight to see, on a fine day at one of the fashionable promenades, people of every colour and clime dressed in the costume of their native countries.

Almost every family keeps a crowd of servants: now and then you see a Tartar coachman, or hear of a Flemish cook; but the chief part of the servants are Russian

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peasants, who come to the metropolis from all parts of the empire, in hope of getting higher wages than they can earn at home. Among them was

The Russian Nurse.

Her name was Erena. We first became acquainted with her in the beginning of 1827. She called at my house one day, and inquired for my wife; and when she saw her, she curtsied, and said, "I have heard that you want a servant. I should like to live with you. I can bring a good character, and I am not afraid of work." Her appearance was much in her favour. She was a sharp, clever-looking girl. Her dress was plain and neat. There was nothing gaudy or expensive about her. It was just what you would wish and expect to see in a good servant. My wife engaged her, and she came almost immediately, and all went on well until Ash-wednesday. This is the first day of Lent, and then begins the long fast, which many of the Greek church observe, as if it secured the salvation of their souls. Besides rigid fasting, they go to church two or three times daily, and, in "Passion week," many of them go there four times a day. Erena was a strict observer of the Greek ceremonies, and she was determined to perform them. Her mistress spoke to her of the impropriety of going out so often, but she replied, "Do you wish me to lose my soul, ma'am?" "No," was the answer; "far from it: I wish your soul to be saved; but your fasting, praying, and going to church, will not save your soul. There must be something more than all this. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of sinners, and it is by faith in him alone that sinners are saved." "Ah," said she, "that is your religion, but I have been taught differently, and I must attend to my own religion." Frequent conversations to the same effect took place, until my wife said to me, "I think we shall be obliged to part with Erena, she is so superstitious." I said, "The poor girl is ignorant. Try to throw a little light into her mind, and then the superstitions will drop off like the leaves in the autumn: there will be nothing to hold them." The next day her mistress said to her. "Erena, I wish to teach you to read: would you like to learn?" "Oh yes, ma'am, I should be delighted to learn." So the work of education commenced; and, in the course of a few weeks, she could make out an easy lesson very well Then she was supplied

with a Russian Testament, which she studied diligently whenever she had a little leisure. She has told us since, that from the first day she came to live with us, she was very observant about our religion, and that she was much struck with our family worship. She saw the propriety of it, and often felt it deeply, though she could not then understand a word we said. These things were all new to her. She had never lived in a house where there was family prayer before; but God was thus about to prepare her mind for the great change which she was soon to experience.

That "great change" took place on the Lord's-day, and in the following manner:—When we went to chapel, her mistress left Erena in charge of our children, and said to her, "I recommend you, Erena, to read the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles." "Very well," she replied. This excited her curiosity. "What can there be in the tenth chapter of the Acts?" and she soon began to read. And as she proceeded, she found that Cornelius fasted, and prayed, and gave alms. "Ah, this is delightful," she thought. "This man was of our religion; he kept the fast.' But when she found that an angel was sent to him to tell him what he must do, this staggered her. She was astonished, and seemed disappointed, and on our return home, she came to her instructress, and with an inquiring countenance said, "I wish you would explain this to me, ma'am; I don't understand it. Here is a very good man who kept the fast, and prayed to God, and gave alms; but that was not enough: now why was it not enough? I never was taught to do anything more. Tell me, why was the angel sent to him?" Her mistress cautiously avoided saying anything that would appear like an attack upon her religion, but answered, "Do you think God would send an angel to you, or to us, or to any other person, unless some important end was to be answered by it?" "Ah," said she, "I did not think of that." "Very well, then; read the chapter through, and examine every verse, and you will find out why the angel was sent to him." She then returned to her room, and read the chapter attentively, until she came to that beautiful verse, where Peter says of Christ, "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." This was enough. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shone into her

heart, to give her the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6. The scales fell from her eyes, and she saw in a moment the way of salvation. She could read no more. She arose, and running to her mistress, she clasped her hands, and exclaimed, "Oh, ma'am, now I see it! now I see it! now I see it! It was not by fasting that he was to be saved; not by praying that he was to be saved; not by giving alms that he was to be saved; but by believing on the Son of God. Now I see it!" and from that day the change was glorious. She became one of the most active and devoted, and, perhaps, useful young Christians that we had ever seen.

Now, reader, permit me to tell you some of her endeavours to do good. About a year after her conversion, a circumstance occurred which afforded her continual opportunities for explaining God's method of saving sinners to persons whom she had never seen before. I began to be extensively employed in circulating the Scriptures, and prayer books, and religious tracts. This brought multitudes of people about us. Some days our house was like a fair, not "Vanity Fair," but crowds of people coming for books; and there was scarcely a person who came to whom she could speak, but she would in simple striking language show them how God can be just, and yet "the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," Rom. iii. 26. She spoke the German, and Finnish, and Russian languages, and thus she had ample scope for gratifying the desires of her heart; nor did she ever appear so happy as when she could get the ear of a poor sinner to listen to the words of eternal life.

One striking instance of her usefulness must not be passed over; and I hope that every one who reads or hears it may be encouraged to attempt great things. A hawker called at my house to sell his wares, when she inquired, "Have you a New Testament, brother?" "No," said the man; "a Testament would be of no use to me." "Why?" "Because I cannot read." "Ah, but it might be of use to you though you cannot read." "How?" said the hawker. "Perhaps some of your family can read." "Yes, I did not think of that; my brother has two boys at school who can read." "Well, then, buy a Testament, and let the boys read to your poor old father, that he may hear something about the Lord Jesus Christ before he dies." The man bought it, and as he was going away, she said to him,

"Where do you live?" "I am a thousand versts from home," he replied, "but at present I live in a lodging house." "Are there many lodgers besides you?" "Yes, many." "Perhaps some of them can read." "I do not know. I never saw a book among them." So he departed, and we saw him no more, until the winter commenced, when thousands of the labouring classes go back into the interior to their families. And now the hawker made his appearance again, and said to my wife, "Will you please to let me have a copy of every book you have in the house?" "That is a large order, friend; what are you going to do with so many books?" "You would not ask that question, ma'am, if you knew what good that New Testament has done which Erena recommended to me in the spring." "What good has it done? I should like to hear." "Before I bought that book it was the custom with many of the lodgers to go out into the city after supper, and come home at midnight drunk, while others were playing at cards at home; but as soon as I showed them the New Testament, one said, 'I can read;' and another said, 'I can read;' and a third said, 'I can read;' so they took it by turns, and read chapter after chapter. This excited a deep interest, and the drunkards forsook their glass, and the gamblers their cards; and there are neither drunkards nor card-players in our lodging-house now, ma'am. They hear two or three chapters, and then cross themselves, and lie down to sleep. And as these men are returning to their families, they wish to take home a copy of that book which has been so beneficial to themselves."

Who could help exclaiming, after hearing this, "Surely the Lord hath done great things whereof we are glad!" Psa. cxxvi. 3. Here were vices forsaken; sinners reformed; the Scriptures circulated; many copies of the holy Book going to villages where it had never been seen before. Oh what pleasure can be so great as that connected with doing good to souls!

But some young servants may say, "It is not in my power to imitate such an example, for I have not the opportunity." True; it may be so: but there are several things in which you may imitate her.

1. Her endeavour to do good to other servants.

Her kind and winning manner had a happy effect on young people. It was irresistible. They appeared as if

held by a charm while she spoke to them about their souls. Take the following as a specimen.

A family near us had many servants. One of them came to my door on a sabbath evening, when Erena was sitting in the porch, reading the Gospel of John. "Come in," said the devout reader. "Be seated. Would you like to hear a portion of God's holy word?" "Oh, yes, by all means. Proceed." The place of the Scripture which she read was this; "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, who is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He. The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him," John iv. 23—26, 28—30. "Delightful," said the visitor, "pray stop a moment, and I will go and call my fellow servants. I think they will rejoice to hear it, for surely they have never heard such things since they were born." She then arose, and ran and called her fellow servants, and brought three of them with her, and the same chapter was read again, accompanied by many solemn remarks on the state of unconverted sinners, and the suitableness and all-sufficiency of Jesus to save all that come unto God by him. Erena also urged on them the necessity of coming to Christ immediately, as every effort to get to heaven in any other way would be of no avail. These remarks were delivered with peculiar emotion, and frequently watered with her tears, and her hearers were as much affected as she was. They wept profusely; and when the chapter was finished, they departed, acknowledging with gratitude the pleasure they had enjoyed from hearing words which they had never heard before.

The mistress of Erena listened with great delight to a part of these proceedings, and when she saw the visitors, the tears were still glistening in their eyes. It ought to be noticed, that none of these four young women were able to read, and it is more than probable, that they had lived until that day without hearing a chapter in a language which

they could understand. But now the seal was loosed, and the book was opened, and the blessed Saviour seemed to be speaking to them. One of these young women afterwards came to my wife for a New Testament, and "The Dairyman's Daughter," and "The Young Cottager," in the Russian language, to send to her brother, who could read, and who lived several hundred miles off. On receiving these precious treasures, her heart seemed to swell with ecstacy. She pressed them to her bosom, and kissed the hand from which she received them. Had some cold-hearted professor—some neglecter of his Bible, witnessed this scene, he would have felt it as a dagger to his conscience. And could the lovers of the Bible have witnessed it, they would have felt a joy similar to that which angels feel when a sinner is brought to repentance.

2. You can imitate her in her attachment to her employers.

We had constant proofs of her desire to please us, especially in the care which she took of our dear children. We could leave them without any anxiety if Erena was there. We had no fears that they would be neglected, or that any thing improper would be taught them in her presence. When that dreadful scourge, the cholera, visited St. Petersburg, it pleased God to send it to my house, and by it to remove two of our sons. My wife also was in a perilous condition, and I was attacked; and now it was that the religion of the nurse shone most brightly in her tenderness, watchfulness, prayerfulness, diligence, and untiring efforts to serve us. Indeed she was more like a sister than a servant; and now we had a rich reward for all the pains which had been taken to lead her to the Saviour. We had a man-servant, but he was frightened and ran away. We had a cook, but she was supposed to be dying. Our chief support was our nurse. Many kind friends took it by turns to come and help us; but Erena was always there, until our children were put into the silent grave, and we began to recover. Then she was attacked also; but even then she seemed almost to forget herself in her anxiety about us. I have often thought if masters and mistresses knew what a blessing this young woman was to my family, much more would be done to promote the piety of servants than has yet been attempted.

3. You can imitate her love to her relatives.

Amidst all her attempts to do good to strangers, she was not

unmindful of her relatives. They had the first claim, and she met it. We have often known her leave herself without a rouble, in order to send a few comforts to her aged mother; and these were always accompanied with some good books, and a pressing letter on the subject of salvation. Nor was this labour in vain. We had every reason to believe that God blessed her pious solicitude in making her mother a genuine Christian. Not long before we left Russia, she came to visit her daughter; and that she might have frequent opportunities of conversing with her, we asked the old woman to stop a few weeks at our house. While she was with us, she fell sick, and died; and it was particularly gratifying to us to witness the tender solicitude of Erena, both for the body and the soul of her parent. One day, as she was supposed to be drawing near her end, my little boy said, "Erena, I think the 14th chapter of John would just suit your mother." The girl took the hint, and went immediately to the bed-side and told what the boy had said, and then read the chapter to her mother. This seemed to rouse every energy. The old woman arose, and sat up in the bed, and thanked God for putting it into the heart of the boy to send her such strong consolation, and then, while praying down blessings on her daughter, she expired.

Erena was wonderfully supported, and tried to turn the death of her mother to good account. It is customary as soon as a Russian dies, for two or more persons, called "Readers for the dead," to be employed in reading over the corpse night and day until the funeral. This is dreary work. The reading is generally very monotonous, and, if it could be understood, would be very unprofitable. Therefore Erena gave the book of Psalms to the men, saying, "Read that;" hoping thereby that her mother's death might be blessed to them.

Not long after this excellent young woman had followed her mother to the grave, she accompanied us to the steamer, and, as she stood gazing on us, to take the last farewell, she wiped away her tears with one hand, and waved the other in the air, as if to say, "We shall meet again, in heaven!" Hallelujah!

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THE NORTHUMBRIAN GIRL.

JANE MATTHEWS was a native of Northumberland, and spent most of her life in a solitary house near the foot of one of its extensive hills, which half buried the obscure dwelling. Around, the scenery was for the most part wild, and the dwellings of men "few and far between."

Jane was the only child of a widowed mother; and they lived with an old uncle. The first time the writer visited her, she was propped up in a chair, and from the nature of her complaints, as well as from her appearance, it was evident that the day of her death was drawing near. But, when asked if she thought there was any danger of her complaint ending seriously, she gave a rather doubtful reply. Her mother, however, soon made it appear that little danger was apprehended by either of them: a single remark having been made about the uncertainty of life, she at once interrupted the conversation by saying, she hoped it had not come to that with Jane yet; and when it should, her child had nothing to fear, as she had never disobeyed her, had seldom missed one sabbath from church, from the time she was five years old, and had read such and such good books, with many other virtues, which the fond mother seemed delighted to enumerate.

As it is, and must be a time of anguish to the unrenewed soul, when first it loses hope of the body's recovery, their visitor was less anxious to undeceive them in this illusion, than to convince them of the truth, that "all our righteousness are as filthy rags," Isa. lxiv. 6; that, not to speak of the sinfulness of our natures, and of our many actual transgressions, even the best of our services are polluted in the sight of Him, who is holy, beyond our utmost conceptions of holiness; and that it is only through that "new and living way," opened by the death and atonement of the Saviour, that we can obtain acceptance before God.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, INSTITUTED 1799; 56, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

"Aye, that's true," was Mrs. Matthews's reply, "we must just trust to the mercy of God, as many a one before us has done." Many a one, she was told, had trusted in God, and had not trusted in vain; but then those persons trusted not alone to the general mercy of God, nor satisfied themselves because they had done as their neighbours did. She was also informed that to receive the pardoning mercy of God, was a personal thing, to obtain which each one must go to God through Jesus Christ, by whom alone there is access unto the Father; that, believing in the efficacy of the blood of atonement, the soul was, by the application of it, washed as with pure water; and that each one to be sanctified and renewed must experience the influence of the Holy Spirit upon his own heart; and that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 5; and that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xiii. 14.

During this, and similar discourse, it is hard to say whether Jane was an attentive or an unconcerned party. Her uncle, who had sat all the while smoking, taking his pipe from his mouth, seemed to hope to settle the matter by blaming her minister, who had not been to see her for many weeks. Jane shook her head mournfully, as if she agreed with her uncle's remark; but she listened attentively when told that as religion was a personal concern, so it was a happy thing for us that mortal man could not prevent, or even retard the salvation of the immortal soul. "Yes, Jane," said her visitor, "we must stand in our own lot at the end of the day. But blessed be God, 'there is a Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,' 1 Tim. ii. 5; and he is not an 'High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,' Heb. iv. 15; but He is even found of them that asked not for him." The old man made no further observation; but Jane expressed a desire to think of these things, until another visit should take place.

In a few days afterwards, another visit was made, when the scene with poor Mrs. Matthews was indeed changed, she having just a little before learned that the recovery of her daughter was altogether hopeless.

Oh it is hard, harder than words can tell, for a mother, a widowed mother, to be comforted, when first she learns that her first, and only child, the pride of her heart, the apple of

her eye, the support of her age, is about to be taken from her. "My child! my dear child!" said she, "and can I ever part with her, her father's image! And I shall have no one now to bear me company, when I think and when I speak about her father's love to her and me."

Such was the strain of the distressed mother; her daughter wept in silence. After the first fit of sorrow was over, it was attempted to soothe the grief of both, by saying, "they might meet again, and that in a better land;" a land, where there should be no more sickness, and "no more sorrow, and no more death," and where "God himself should wipe away all tears from our eyes," Rev. xxi. 4. "But woe's me!" (woe to me,) "to part with all that's dear, and to have no one left to close my eyes, and put me in my winding sheet," was the sad reply. "My dear Mrs. Matthews," said her visitor, "let us be but clothed with the righteousness of Jesus, 'with the garments of salvation,' Isa. lxi. 10, and then we need but little care for the stranger, or the stranger's shroud." Our great concern ought to be, what shall become of our souls: shall the chariots of heaven and the angels of bliss convey our spirits thither, or shall we be thrust into that place where "there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth?" Matt. xiii. 42.

"O yes, mother," said Jane, bursting into tears, "if I were sure of going to heaven, I should be quite willing to die;" and turning to her visitor, she said with much simplicity, "You see, ———, I just know the Bible and the Testament, and I don't know the way about these things." "My dear girl," said the person addressed, "if you know what is contained in the Bible and the Testament, you then know that 'Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life,' John xiv. 6; and he saith, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,'" John vi. 37. As Jane looked, rather than replied, she was asked if she believed this. "Yes," said she, "but I am such an ignorant and sinful creature." To this she was asked, if it was not "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the chief of sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. And as she again looked in silence, it was again inquired, "if she believed this, or if she doubted the truth of the words of inspiration." "O yes," was her reply, "I always believed that Jesus died to save sinners." She was

then asked, "if she had ever gone to him that he might save her." After some hesitation, she said, "she did not know; but did not think she ever had."

"Jane," said her friend, "if you had, by mistake, taken such a quantity of poison, as must, if no remedy were found, prove fatal, and if you knew of a physician whose medicines could prove an antidote to the fatal cup, and that nothing else could; and, moreover, if you knew that that physician was inviting you to come to him, that you might be saved, and to obtain from him such things as you have need of, and that 'without money, and without price;' in such a case what would you do?" "I would apply to him," was the instant reply. "And your mere belief that he could relieve you, would not satisfy you, and could not save you?" "No, never," said Jane.

So she was told, that in like manner, we must not only believe that Jesus Christ can save sinners; but that this belief must be acted upon, that we must go to him by faith, and apply the offers of his grace to the wants of our souls, and the purifying of our consciences; that we were by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. ii. 1, but that the Saviour had said, "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly," John x. 10; that he also had said, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," Matt. vii. 7; that if the understanding was darkened, he had promised the enlightening of his Spirit to those who ask him, and that the voice of God in his word was, "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isa. i. 18.

To these and similar statements, Jane still made little reply, and being anxious to know what her feelings were, her friend said, "Perhaps, Jane, you have not even seen the absolute need of the blood of atonement to wash away your sins, much less felt its power of doing so; or, perhaps, you have never asked of God to enlighten you by his Spirit, nor prayed to him for any such blessings." "No," said she, "I did not know I wanted them, and now that I do know, I know not how to pray for them." "No," said her visitor, "'we know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered,' Rom.

viii. 26. Let us but approach the mercy-seat in sincerity, with our minds fixed on him, who is an Advocate with the Father; and perhaps we will find in our happy experience, that before we call, he will answer, and whilst we are yet speaking, he will hear," Isa. lxv. 24.

"Well," said Jane, "although I never thought of these things, yet I have long wished to repent of my sins, and to be more fit for dying." To this it was replied, "That if we wish to repent of our sins, we must first see them; and that in order to see them in all their vileness, their aggravations, and opposition to God's holy law, we must see the price the Saviour paid to save his people from their sins. We must go to Calvary and the cross, and there see the Saviour in his agony, see him in his love, see him in his death, and in the shedding of his precious blood, without which there could have been no remission for our sins."

In further conversation with Jane, she showed herself to be better acquainted with the Scriptures than many. She had read them frequently, and when at a sabbath-school, had committed many portions of them to memory. At the same time, she seemed to know but little of their meaning, of their application nothing. She now, however, seemed to feel anxious about her eternal welfare, and expressed her wish to have these things again spoken of, so soon as another opportunity should occur, as well as her intention of thinking of them in the mean time. Nor was that intention neglected; and on the succeeding visit, it appeared that Jane had spent much time in prayer to Him, of whom it is said, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer," Psa. cii. 17. According to her own account, she, at first, wanted to repent, and to make herself holy, and was grieved to think, that even her best of services might not be acceptable in the sight of God. "At last," said she, "that Scripture, that very Scripture came all at once into my mind, 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin,' 1 John i. 7. And oh, I thought, I then loved Jesus Christ as I had never done before; and I then hated sin more, and thought myself more sinful than I had ever done before."

Faith purifieth the heart, and it "worketh by love," Acts xv. 9; Gal. v. 6. And what said he whom God pronounced "faithful and upright?" "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee,

wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," Job xlii. 5, 6. But the whole tenor of Jane's sentiments and conduct seemed now so much to agree with the word of God, and she appeared to have got such new discoveries of the fulness and suitableness of the character of the Saviour, to meet the wants of the sinner, that the language of a greater than the man of Uz seemed strikingly manifested: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed" these things "unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven," Matt. xvi. 17. She was, however, told, that the conversion of the sinner does not consist merely in the hour of sorrow for sin, neither the life of the Christian in the moments of elevated feeling. That there must not only be a hatred of sin, but a love of holiness, and a constant and continued exercise of those Christian duties and privileges, which are the "fruits of the Spirit," Gal. v. 22. That the language of Scripture was, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord," Hos. vi. 3. But of such sentiments, Jane seemed not only to know the import, but to feel their force, and delight in their influence. In the course of a very short while, "old things had passed away, and all things had become new," 2 Cor. v. 17.

And now, reader, as Jane Matthews's former behaviour was not only decent, but in many respects praiseworthy, you will perhaps think her life required no change; or perhaps you will ask how that change could be so decidedly displayed? The words of our Lord furnish us with an answer, "By their fruits ye shall know them," Matt. vii. 20.

That could be said of Jane's former conduct which cannot be said of a great many, that she had all along abstained from the more flagrant transgressions of the moral law. But she now saw sin to be that abominable thing which God hateth, and which brought the Saviour from the heights of bliss to die for sinful man, and therefore she hated sin. She had before read the Scriptures, but now she delighted to search them; for in them she thought she had eternal life. She loved them, for they testified of Jesus Christ, and she loved him, because he first loved her. Formerly, if she did pray, it was, she said, in a formal and unmeaning manner; but now she poured out her soul in prayer to God; believing in an Advocate with the Father, One through whom the prayer of the saint ascends as incense before the throne of God in heaven. At that throne she con-

fessed her sins, and her short-comings, in the hope that there was "forgiveness with God," Psa. cxxx. 4. She made known her wants, humbly, but sincerely trusting that these would be supplied out of his inexhaustible fulness. Thus her soul was often stirred up to magnify and bless the Lord; and thus she enjoyed communion with her Father and her God.

Yet these happy seasons were not always enjoyed; and often she wondered, and mourned that she did not love the Saviour more, and that heaven with all its happiness should occupy so small a share of her thoughts and desires. She did not, however, judge of the certainty of her salvation by the extent of her feelings or enjoyments; but by God's sure word of promise. It is well, she would say, that "he rests in his love," Zeph. iii. 1, and that whom he loves, he loves unto the end, John xiii. 1. At another time, she would express her hope, that He to whom she had committed the keeping of her soul, would keep it "against that day," 2 Tim. i. 12; and that neither death nor life should be able to separate her from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Of Jane's external behaviour from the time of this change, little can be said. While she was making progress in Divine knowledge, disease was making rapid inroads upon her frail body. She, however, lived about five months from the period alluded to; during which time, she was often exposed to sufferings of a most agonizing kind; and such she sustained with a degree of patience and fortitude, only taught her by the aid of that religion, which enabled her to say, and to say in faith, "He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men," Lam. iii. 33.

The period, however, arrived when these sufferings were to be ended by death. And this was a season in which, from the nature of her complaints, as well as from constitutional timidity, she often apprehended that she would suffer much, and that her struggles with the last enemy might be long and severe. She often prayed that her heavenly Father would soothe her sufferings when on her dying bed. This the all-wise Disposer of events did not see meet to grant. But it may be said, he did "abundantly above and beyond," what she perhaps had asked. After having been some hours unable to speak, when at last death had fixed her eye, and the cold sweat was on her brow, when breath was

long and loud, and the "golden bowl" was all but broken, he enabled her to speak; and her last words were, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. xv. 57.

Far from these narrow scenes of night,
Unbounded glories rise,
And realms of infinite delight,
Unknown to mortal eyes.

There pain and sickness never come,
And grief no more complains;
Health triumphs in immortal bloom,
And endless pleasure reigns.

No cloud those blissful regions know,
For ever bright and fair:
For sin, the source of mortal woe,
Can never enter there.

There no alternate night is known,
Nor sun's faint sickly ray;
But glory from the sacred throne
Spreads everlasting day.

Oh may the heavenly prospect fire
Our hearts with ardent love,
Till wings of faith and strong desire
Bear every thought above.

Prepare us Lord, by grace divine,
For thy bright courts on high;
Then bid our spirits rise and join
The chorus of the sky.

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MARY WILLIAMS.

ON the morning of Saturday the 11th of November, 18—, Mary Williams rose about her usual hour, and pursued her occupations; but in the course of the day, while working at her mangle, she suddenly dropped on the floor, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, her immortal spirit passed away into the presence of its Creator and its Judge.

Mary was about fifty-five years of age, and though not enjoying a very good state of health, yet it was not such as to give any reason to apprehend the near approach of death. The day before that of her death she had spent under the roof, where once she served, in the family of a faithful labourer in the Lord's vineyard, in company with several of the pious poor, who were accustomed occasionally to assemble there, and had united with them in their social worship.

In a very early period of her life, Mary, like too many other young females, unwary and unwatchful in their conduct, at a season of temptation, when the natural gaiety and thoughtlessness of unheeding youth is too often disposed to throw off salutary restraints and the sober counsels of parental solicitude, had fallen a victim to one of those artful and designing characters who, after the example of the evil one, whose they are, and whom they serve, go about seeking whom they may devour, 1 Pet. v. 8. But, through the tender mercy of Him who watches over his wandering sheep when it has gone astray from the right way, to bring it back again to the fold of righteousness, Psa. xxiii. 3, Luke xv. 4, Mary was not left to perish as a prey in the hand of the enemy; nor does it appear that her own mind was at all disposed to continue to pursue the crooked path into which she had been betrayed. How often is such a character lost to society, and driven into the abodes of iniquity, unto total ruin, for want of some one to put forth a friendly hand when the first awakenings of conscience bring into review the sad and awful consequences of the first act of guilt. If, without in the least degree countenancing sin, nay, even placing before the awakened conscience all the depths of its sad

malignity and fearful consequences in the sight of God, such a friend was near to direct other unhappy wanderers into the path of true repentance, and to guide them in the way of righteousness, it might not only preserve them from further transgression and misery, but, under the Divine blessing, lead them to go softly all their days in meekness and true holiness.

Not very long after her fall, Mary was received as a servant into the family of the late Rev. R— S—, of C—, who, with that close discernment of character for which he was so remarkable, ventured to receive her. There she was treated very kindly; her desire to regain her lost character met with encouragement. The kindness of her benefactor received a full reward in her long and faithful services: for twenty years she satisfactorily fulfilled the duties of her humble station. A still more valuable reward awaited their kind and Christian attention in her reception of the truth as it is in Jesus, under the ministry of her revered master, and in her after conduct as a consistent Christian. Not long after the death of her master, and consequent removal of his family, and after one or two temporary changes of situation, she purchased a mangle, with which she chiefly supported herself, aided by a small pension from the family with whom she had so long lived, in testimony of their regard for her former services, and by the occasional kindness of other Christian friends.

In viewing the character of Mary, we may observe some points worthy of imitation.

As a servant, Mary was faithful. It was her constant desire to consider herself bound to act with that habitual integrity which has regard to the interests of the heads of the family; "not with eyeservice," Col. iii. 22, as those who, when under the immediate observation of their superiors, can seem to do well, but who act differently when they are absent.

Mary was affectionate. Her attachment to the family in which she resided, and especially to him under whose ministry she had profited, was very strong. "My honoured master," was her usual expression, and during the long affliction which terminated his valuable life, in her attendance upon him, this attachment was clearly shown. The affection of Mary was sincere; she was not accustomed, as is too often the case with servants, to search out and expose the errors and failings of those with whom they dwell, and

which, in the present state of human nature, it is not to be expected they can be free from: over these she cast the mantle of charity, 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7, and kept within her own bosom whatever did not concern her, never making it the subject of conversation.

Kindness to the poor was another feature in Mary's character. Under the sanction of her master and mistress, she was accustomed, not only to provide from their sources of benevolence many comforts for the poor and afflicted, but she took care to gather up those little fragments which arise in most families, and which, though often wasted, may, when prudently managed by a careful servant, afford great relief to many a needy object.

It is not then surprising that Mary should have gained the esteem of those in whose service she so conducted herself: such was the case. Respected by them in her life, those who remained bore their willing testimony of regard. One said, "I feel myself to have lost a very affectionate friend, though in humble life, and her memory will long live in some of my kindest recollections."

Mary's general conduct was an evidence of the principles she professed. Forbearance, kindness, and Christian charity were displayed in her behaviour towards her relatives, who were not acquainted with those saving truths from which she derived all her comfort. She apprenticed a nephew from her little savings, and supplied his wants during the term; and though her kindness did not meet the grateful return which it deserved, Mary never complained. And when she had retired from her service, and had to dwell among those not like-minded with herself, she maintained the same spirit, often under very trying circumstances. If she could not profit them by direct admonition or advice, she desired to exhibit the temper and spirit of real Christianity, and that without complaining of any contrary spirit in them.

Of her character as a Christian, it may be truly said, that Mary's religion was of a solid cast. She was not a mere professor. For above twenty years she manifested her hatred of all iniquity, and her love of holiness, often under circumstances of much difficulty. Her hope was a "good hope through grace," 2 Thess. ii. 16, fixed on Christ Jesus, the Rock of Ages, sure and stedfast; but it never led her to think highly of herself, or of her attainments, but rather

caused her to bless, with adoring thankfulness, the God of mercy and love, who had made her a monument of his sovereign grace.

The word of God, the means of grace, and the society of Christian friends, afforded her consolation here; but she looked to the rest which remaineth to the people of God as her home. When one of those with whom she spent the evening previous to her death observed, in allusion to the house in which she then was, "Well, Mary, you feel quite at home here," she replied, "No, not quite at home yet; but I soon shall be," though it is probable she little thought then how soon.

But while we offer the example, we must not omit to offer the warning which the case conveys. Reader, Mary was called away in a moment! Time closed upon her, and eternity instantly opened upon her view; and when she was about her ordinary work, we trust she was waiting for the coming of her Lord. Are you doing this? If you are, sudden death, if it comes, will be to you sudden glory; but if you are not, it will be to you swift destruction. Look into your own heart. Do you know yourself to be a sinner, and do you know Christ Jesus to be your Saviour, to atone for your sin, and cleanse you from its pollution? Can you say that He of God is made unto you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption? 1 Cor. i. 30. If you cannot, then "seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near," Isa. lv. 6. For what is your life? it is even as a vapour, and may soon pass away. Look into your general walk and conduct, is it such as to give evidence that you are "born again" of the Spirit of God? John iii. 3. 5; if it is, you are safe; if it is not, you are in awful danger. Remember the Scripture saith, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," 2 Cor. v. 17; and, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Rom. viii. 9. It is to those only who are "in Christ Jesus," that "there is no condemnation," Rom. viii. 1. All others are in danger of perishing with the world of the ungodly. "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh," Matt. xxiv. 44.

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